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Trump hits India with 27% tariffs

India says tariff is 'mixed bag' and not a setback; US mkt lost $2T, triggering recession fear

WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

President Donald Trump slapped universal duties on all countries exporting goods to the US and additional steep levies on countries.

The US imposed a 27 per cent 'discounted' tariff on all goods, barring pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, energy and certain minerals not available in the United States, that are imported from India, calling the country the "worst offenders" of unfair trade practices.

The Commerce and Industry Ministry official said that the move is a "mixed bag" and not a setback. The government reacted cautiously, saying it is "carefully examining the implications" of the announcements.

Roughly $2 trillion was erased from the S&P 500 Index amid worries that Trump's tariffs could plunge the economy into a recession.

Export of products such as shrimp, carpet, medical devices and gold jewellery to the US will be impacted. On the other hand, exports of electronics, textiles, and pharma will get an edge over its competitor countries. Exemption of energy from the tariffs would also mean that India can continue to export fuels like gas oil and gasoline.

The goods that were exempted from the tariffs made up for 25 per cent of the total exports.

The baseline duty of 10 per cent will be effective on India from 5 April and an additional 27 per cent from 9 April.

The 27 per cent duty would be over and above existing levy Indian products entering the US currently attract.

Trump said that the tariffs imposed on India were half of what New Delhi charged the US -- 52 per cent after factoring in trade and non-trade barriers and currency adjustments.

India's goods trade surplus with the US was USD 46 billion in 2024 (1.2 per cent of GDP). India's software exports to the US, at USD 103 billion in FY24, too would have no tariff impact.

Engineering goods and specialty chemicals could be worst impacted. Automobiles exports from India to the US is just USD 2.8 billion, or 3 per cent of total exports. For the Indian gems and jewellery sector the US tariff developments now create additional adverse impact, with an increased risk of job losses and margin erosion.

Gems and jewellery exports stand at USD 11.5 billion or almost 13 per cent of all exports to the US. India is working on a Bilateral Trade Agreement with the US which is targeted to be rolled out by late 2025. Possibly higher defence and oil/gas imports from the US could help negotiate a favourable treaty but pressure to reduce agri import duties may be a political hot potato. —*PTI*

>>>More on Pages 3, 5, 6 &7

President Donald Trump holds a signed executive order during an event to announce new tariffs at White House on Wednesday ***PHOTO: PTI***

> **India is very, very tough. The PM (Narendra Modi) just left. He's a great friend of mine, but I said, you're a friend of mine, but you're not treating us right. They charge us 52 per cent.**
>
> -Donald Trump, US President

Trump spares pharma from tariffs

The US administration has exempted pharmaceuticals from reciprocal tariffs, underscoring the critical role played by generic medicines globally.

India imports USD 800 million worth of pharmaceutical products from the US and exports USD 8.7 billion

The US healthcare system relies heavily on India's robust generic manufacturing and China's API production Pharma exports at USD 12.7 billion form almost 14 per cent of total exports to the US from India.

Indian pharmaceutical companies supply a substantial proportion of drugs to US residents, with four out of ten of all prescriptions filled in the US in 2022 being supplied by Indian companies.

As per industry sources, medicines from Indian companies provided USD 219 billion in savings to the US healthcare system in 2022 and a total of USD 1.3 trillion between 2013 and 2022.

Pharma stocks' 'Liberation Day' bull run

Sun Pharma	: 3.41%
Dr Reddy's Laboratories	: 0.16%
Lupin	: 4.19%
Torrent	: 1.16%
Glenmark	: 1.67%
Nifty Pharma	: 2.25%

US tariffs' impact on India will be smaller: Raghuram

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

Former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan on Thursday described the reciprocal tariffs on about 60 countries by the Trump administration a "self goal" and said its impact on India will be "smaller". "Let us recognise that in the short run, this will adversely affect the US economy first and foremost -- it is a self-goal as footballers would say. Coming to the effects on other countries, the direct effect of any tariff on India's exports will be to raise prices for US consumers, reducing their demand, and hence Indian growth," he told PTI. Responding to a question, he said the US reciprocal tariffs on India will probably be disinflationary. — *PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Kannada language activist, writer Narayana dies

BENGALURU, 3 APRIL

Writer PV Narayana, who has been leading the Kannada movements for over 50 years, died here on Thursday due to age-related ailments. He was 82 years old. Narayana was born in 1942 in Akkirampura village in Tumakuru district. A scholar, Narayana held two Masters in Arts, Kannada and English. He studied in Bengaluru, Tumakuru, Mysuru and Dharwad. As a translator, Narayana brought to Kannada over 22 works from English and Telugu. — *PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

SC judges to publicly declare assets

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

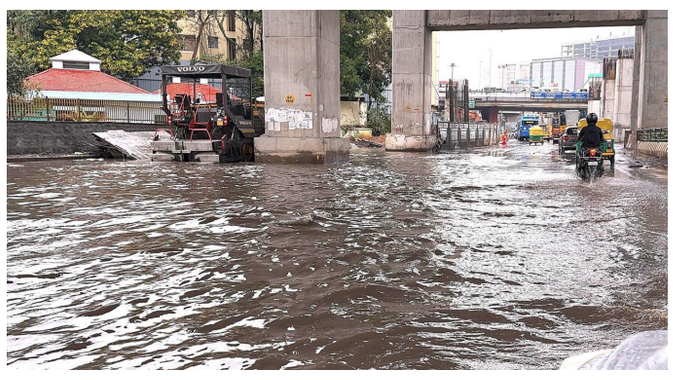
In a landmark decision aimed at enhancing transparency, judges of the Supreme Court of India have agreed to publicly declare their assets upon assuming office. During a full court meeting, the judges resolved to disclose their asset declarations on a voluntary basis via the Supreme Court's official website. Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and thirty other judges have already submitted their asset declarations. The resolution mandates the disclosure of any substantial acquisitions to the Chief Justice, reinforcing accountability within the judiciary. The initiative marks a significant step towards transparency in the Indian legal system. — *PTI*

2024 worst year for aid workers as 377 people killed: UN

BENGALURU, 3 APRIL

The United Nations (UN) has termed 2024 to be the worst year for aid workers, with as many as 337 of them being killed in the war between Israeli forces and Hamas, a Palestinian militant group. 408 aid workers, including over 280 from Palestine, have lost their lives since the war broke out in Gaza in October, 2023. The recent attacks on humanitarian workers took place on March 23 when Israeli forces opened fire on a group of aid workers while they were on a rescue mission in Rafah. Several relief vehicles were also damaged. — *PTI*

CITY UNPREPARED FOR RAINS



Rains lashed Bengaluru on Thursday, bringing relief from the heat but also triggering severe waterlogging in areas such as Silkboard Junction; A huge tree falls on a car at Rajajinagar. According to IMD, rains will lash State on 4 and 5 April ***PHOTOS: MOHAMMED ASAD/ SALAR***

SC invalidates 25,753 teacher appointments in West Bengal

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

In a significant ruling, the Supreme Court of India has invalidated the appointments of 25,753 teachers and staff in state-run and state-aided schools in West Bengal, deeming the selection process "vitiated and tainted." The verdict, announced on 3 April, 2025, upheld a previous Calcutta High Court decision from 22 April, 2024, that identified widespread irregularities, including OMR sheet tampering and rank-jumping, in the 2016 recruitment process.

Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna stated that the manipulations and fraud during the recruitment process severely undermined its credibility. However, the court ruled that current employees would not need to return any wages and granted an exception for a disabled employee to remain in her position. The West Bengal BJP responded by demanding the resignation of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, holding her accountable for the corruption within the recruitment process. —*PTI*

> **When the whole process of recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff in West Bengal government schools has been termed tainted by the Supreme Court, it cannot be determined who was eligible and who was not.**
>
> -Petitioners' lawyer
>
> **I cannot accept this judgment. Over 11,000 of the affected teachers taught in Class 9 and 10, and more than 5,500 in Class 11 and 12. These are crucial years. Do BJP and CPI(M) want the education system to collapse?**
>
> -Mamata Banerjee, WB CM

Modi to meet B'desh's Yunus in Thailand

BANGKOK, 3 APRIL

During his Thailand visit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to hold talks with Bangladesh Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus on Friday, their first meeting since the ouster of prime minister Sheikh Hasina in August last year. The meeting between Modi and Yunus is likely to take place on the sidelines of the 6th BIMSTEC Summit, the first in-person deliberations of the leaders of the regional grouping since 2018. Modi's meeting with Yunus comes as the ties between India and Bangladesh have declined. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

Govt tables Waqf Bill in Rajya Sabha; JD(U) leader quits

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

Union Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Thursday rejected the opposition's allegations that the rights of Muslims were being snatched away. While tabling the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025 in the Rajya Sabha, he also clarified that the "inclusive" legislation aims to empower Muslim women and protect the rights of all Muslim sects and asserted it had nothing to do with religions but deals only with properties.

Meanwhile senior JD(U) leader leader Mohammed Qasim Ansari on Thursday resigned from the party, expressing 'deep disappointment' over the party's support for the Waqf Amendment Bill in a letter to Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

Some of the opposition MPs in the Upper House were wearing black as a mark of protest against the bill. The Lok Sabha passed the bill with a 288-232 vote in the early hours of Thursday after over 12 hours of debate.

The minister informed the House that there were 4.9 lakh Waqf properties in 2004, which have now increased to 8.72 lakh making it the owner of largest chunk of properties leaving Defence and Railways.

Kiren Rijiju ***PHOTO: PTI***

Speaking on 'Waqf by User', the Minority Affairs Minister said properties already registered with proper documentation will not be dealt with retrospectively.

"However, if there is any disputed land or any matter that is sub judice, then we cannot do away with the right of the courts. So all the Waqf properties which are registered with proper documentation, they will remain so," Rijiju said.

Congress' Mallikarjun Kharge urged BJP to withdraw the bill. He argued that when Hindu trusts do not allow Muslims or Dalits, then Waqf institutions should not have non-Muslim appointees.

TVK, led by Tamil superstar Vijay, has announced a statewide protest on Friday, demanding the repeal of the Waqf Bill. —*PTI*

This is serious: SC halts tree felling in Telangana

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

The Supreme Court has ordered the Telangana government to justify the "compelling urgency" behind its extensive tree felling next to the University of Hyderabad, imposing a stay on any further activity until further notice.

A bench, comprising Justices BR Gavai and Augustine George Masih, described the situation in the Kancha Gachibowli Forest as "very serious," following an interim report indicating a significant number of trees had already been cut down along with the use of heavy machinery.

The apex court mandated the state chief secretary to answer critical questions, including the necessity for clearing the green area for development.

The justices cautioned that any identified lapses could result in action against the chief secretary, including possible detention.

Additionally, the Supreme Court appointed a central empowered committee to assess the situation and submit findings before the next hearing on 16 April. The bench also highlighted that the area appears to be home to various wildlife species and contains a lake.

Students from the University of Hyderabad have been protesting the government's development plans for the 400-acre parcel, having begun an indefinite class boycott and hunger strike.They are demanding the authorities withdraw police from campus.

>More on Page 4 —*PTI*

COUSIN ATTACKED

Girl raped near KR Puram Railway Stn

BENGALURU, 3 APRIL

Two men allegedly raped a 19-year-old labourer from Bihar in the City, police said on Thursday.

The incident occurred near KR Puram railway station in the early hours of Wednesday, they added.

The City police arrested two accused, one of whom is identified as Ashif.

Police said the victim had been working in Kerala's Kattappan town but decided to return home as she was unhappy with the job.

She took a ticket to Mangaluru but used the same ticket to reach Bengaluru. She then planned to travel to Bihar.

After informing their cousin in the City, the girl arrived at KR Puram railway station around 1.13am, police said.

Accompanied by her cousin, she was walking towards Mahadevapura to get food when two unidentified men stopped them.

The assailants allegedly attacked the victim's cousin and restrained him, while one of them dragged the victim to a secluded area and sexually assaulted her, police said.

Hearing the victim's cries for help, some passersby rushed to the spot, forcing the attackers to flee. However, the public managed to catch one of the suspects, Ashif, and handed him over to the police. A case has been registered against both. —*PTI*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

- She was walking towards Mahadevapura to get food when two men stopped her. They allegedly attacked the victim's cousin and restrained him, while one of them dragged the victim to a secluded area and raped her

Govt explores skill dvpt tie up with Melbourne varsity

BENGALURU, 4 APRIL

Karnataka skill development department and Melbourne's RMIT University have discussed potential collaborations to enhance re-skilling and up-skilling initiatives for students in the state. A delegation from RMIT, led by Deputy Vice-Chancellor Mish Eastman, met with Medical Education and Skill Development Minister Dr Sharan Prakash Patil at Vikasa Soudha. They focused on strengthening ties to improve skill training in Karnataka. Eastman praised the state's efforts in skill education and emphasised RMIT's interest in training trainers with globally relevant skills. Dr Patil highlighted the role of the Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya Institute in Chikkaballapur and the state's focus on upgrading trainers to global standards. *—Salar News*

4 killed in crash on B'luru-Mysuru Expressway

MYSURU, 3 APRIL

Four members of a Bengaluru family were killed in a road accident on the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway near Tubinakere on Thursday. The incident occurred around 11.45 am when a car, attemptingto exit the highway, suddenly stopped. A KSRTC Airavat luxury bus, approaching from behind, collided with the vehicle.

Mandya SP Mallikarjun Baladandi confirmed that one person died on the spot, two succumbed on the way to the hospital, and another passed away at the hospital. Preliminary findings suggest the car driver applied a sudden brake. The police have called in an expert team for further investigation, and highway engineers will assess the exit for potential improvements. The victims were residents of Bengaluru's JP Nagar, heading towards Piriyapatna..

—Salar News

Burglars steal Rs 8 lakh gold from judge's house

BIDAR, 3 APRIL

Burglars struck the residence of Second Additional Civil Judge and Second JMFC District Judge MD Shaij in the judicial residential quarters in the city and stole gold ornaments worth Rs 8 lakh, police said on Thursday. The theft was committed on 29 March as the Shaij was in Koppal, his native place, to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr, police said. The theft came to light on 1 April when a servant went to the house to water plants, they said.

The CCTV captured footage of four persons entering the house from the rear.

—Salar News

Man kills wife, kids before ending life

KALABURAGI, 3 APRIL

A man killed his wife and two children before taking his own life at an apartment in Gabare Layout on Old Jewargi Road in the city late on Wednesday night, police said. The deceased have been identified as Santosh Koral, 45, who killed his wife Shruti, 35, and their children nine-year-old Munish and three-month-old Anish. Santosh was a senior assistant accountant at Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company Limited (GESCOM). Police Commissioner Sharanappa SD, who inspected the crime scene, said, "It appears that Santosh strangled his wife and children to death before hanging himself." Santosh and Shruti had been married for 10 years, but their relationship had been strained with frequent disputes. For the past seven years, the couple had been estranged from both their families. *Help is available. Please call Tele Manas at 14416, SAHAI at 080-25497777 for support.*

—Salar News

HC denies relief to X in case against govt's Sahyog portal

It says X can seek protection if any action was taken against it

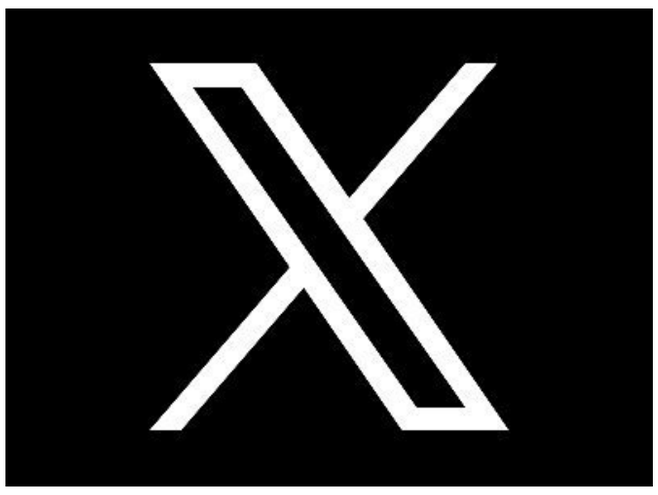
BENGALURU, 3 APRIL

High Court on Thursday declined to grant interim relief to X Corp on its plea against the Central government's mandatory onboarding requirement for its 'Sahyog' portal. It observed that there is no reason for the company to be apprehensive of any coercive action at this juncture.

Justice M Nagaprasanna heard X Corp's petition against the government's directive requiring it to join the Sahyog portal—a platform facilitating content-blocking orders for social media and internet intermediaries.

The court also said X Corp has been granted the liberty to seek protection if any action was taken against it.

X Corp has argued that the mechanism lacks the legal safeguards outlined under Section 69A of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000.



X Corp has argued that the mechanism lacks the legal safeguards outlined under Section 69A of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 ***PHOTO: X***

Instead, the government has based its blocking orders on Section 79(3)(b) of the IT Act, a provision that limits intermediary protections under certain conditions, it contended.

Senior Advocate K G Raghavan, representing X Corp, contended that the Supreme Court upheld the validity of Section 69A in the Shreya Singhal case because of its inbuilt safeguards.

He sought to know whether the government could bypass these protections by invoking Section 79(3)(b) instead. The counsel further prayed to the court to restrain the government from taking coercive action against X Corp.

He emphasised that X Corp was not challenging Indian laws, but rather the way Section 79(3)(b) was being used.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and Additional Solicitor General Aravind Kamath, representing the Centre, asserted that all intermediaries must comply with Indian laws, including content moderation requirements.

The court pointed to the Centre's assurance that X Corp need not fear any coercive action at this stage.

The case has now been posted for hearing on 24 April.

LoP in Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah during a meeting in New Delhi ***PHOTO: PTI***

K'taka to establish gig workers' board

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday met Congress leader and Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi at his Delhi residence to discuss the implementation of the Gig Workers' Welfare Act, as promised during the Bharat Jodo Yatra and elections.

The meeting was also attended by Ministers Santosh Lad, Priyank Kharge, and MB Patil.

The government has decided to establish a Gig Workers' Welfare Board to ensure the well-being of workers employed by companies like Amazon, Flipkart, Ola, Uber, and others. A 5 per cent cess will be collected from concerned companies, while the remaining required funds will be provided by the state government to support welfare schemes for gig workers.

A comprehensive bill covering all aspects of gig workers' welfare will be prepared and presented before the State cabinet for approval.

Three gig worker representatives—Rakshitha Dev (Karnataka), Salahuddin (Hyderabad), and Nikhil Dev—were also invited to the meeting. They appreciated the government's initiative and expressed hope for better working conditions.

Santosh Lad was quoted as saying that Rahul Gandhi, who had earlier advocated for gig workers' rights during the Bharat Jodo Yatra, welcomed the eight-point proposal prepared by the Labour department. Rahul Gandhi also emphasised the need for swift implementation to safeguard gig workers' interests. *—Salar News*

BJP lays siege to CM's house, leaders detained

BENGALURU, 3 APRIL

Former chief minister BS Yediyurappa and several other senior BJP leaders in the State were taken under preventive custody on Thursday when they took out a march to lay siege to the Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's Office residence.

BJP State President BY Vijayendra and Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R Ashoka were among the BJP MLAs taken into custody.

The party on Wednesday started the day and night protest at the Freedom Park against the price rise and other issues and they started march towards Chief Minister's residence on Thursday.

Speaking to reporters later, Vijayendra said the agitation is against the price rise, 4 per cent reservation for Muslims in government contracts and diversion of funds meant for Scheduled Caste Sub Plan and Scheduled Tribes Sub Plan.

BJP leaders protest against the hike in prices of essential commodities in Bengaluru on Thursday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

The agitations took place in several parts of State.

According to the BJP office bearers, the party has also planned a 'Janakrosha Yatra' (Public Outrage March) from 7 April, starting in Mysuru, which will be flagged off by Union Minister Pralhad Joshi.

As per the schedule, the march will cover the Mysuru and Chamarajanagar districts. On 8 April, it will reach Mandya and Hassan, and on 9 April it will proceed to Kodagu and Mangaluru.

The first phase will conclude in Udupi and Chikkamagaluru on 10 April. The second phase, starting on 13 April, will cover the Shivamogga and Uttara Kannada districts.

The movement will cover all districts. *—PTI*

Teacher electrocuted as live wire falls on her

GANGAVATI, 3 APRIL

A private school teacher died after a live electric wire fell on her at Jangamara Kalgudagi village in Gangavati taluk, Koppal, on Thursday morning, police have said.

The deceased has been identified as Harita Srinivas, 26, a teacher at Sri Gotyipaati Venkatratnam Memorial School in Vidyanagar. She was walking to the pick-up point of the school bus after her father-in-law Purnachandrarao dropped her off on a bike when the live wire fell on her, killing her on the spot, police said.

Harita Srinivas is the mother of four-year-old twins.

The electricity department said the live wire broke because of heavy rains on Wednesday night.

—Salar News

Madrasa to reopen after 9 yrs in Mysuru

MYSURU, 3 APRIL

- The Alima Sadiya Trust and a few Muslim religious leaders had approached the High Court against the district administration's order to shut the institution, saying that it would be used only to impart religious education and that no prayers would

A madrasa run by Halima Sadiya Trust, which was shut down nine years ago after the murder of right-wing activist Raju at Kyathamaranahalli in NR Assembly segment, will be reopened following a High Court of Karnataka directive, sources said on Thursday.

Deputy Commissioner G Lakshmikanth Reddy has ordered the reopening of the madrasa after a meeting with both parties and conveyed the decision to the high court, they said.

The madrasa was shut by the district administration for security reasons following communal clashes after the murder of Raju.

The Alima Sadiya Trust and a few Muslim religious leaders had approached the High Court against the district administration's order to shut the institution, saying that it would be used only to impart religious education and that no prayers would be conducted there or a mosque would be built.

Local Hindu leaders opposed this, saying that neither a mosque nor a madrassa should be established there and suggested providing land elsewhere for the madrassa.

The high court, after hearing all parties related to the dispute, left the decision to the Mysuru district administration, asking Reddy to conduct a meeting with both parties and convey the conclusion by 3 April.

As a precautionary measure, police have made security arrangements in Kyathamaranahalli area.

—Salar News

Tahsildar expedites certificates for ailing man

GAURIBIDANUR, 3 APRIL

In a display of prompt government service, Mahesh Patri, the Tahsildar of Gauribidanur, took swift action to assist an ailing man with urgent documentation. At around 1.30pm, Patri, noticed an elderly man lying near the office entrance. Upon inquiry, the man's daughter explained that her father, who had undergone cancer surgery, needed an Aadhaar card, Caste, and Income Certificates to be admitted to Kidwai Memorial Hospital in Bengaluru.

Patri immediately summoned the concerned staff and arranged for the Caste and Income certificates to be issued on the spot. The certificates were prepared within an hour.

Patri explained that, as the man was unable to move around due to his illness, it was his duty to ensure the work was done quickly. The man had migrated from Andhra Pradesh and settled in Doddaparagodu. *—Salar News*

LANGUAGE ROW

Locals oppose M'rashtra auditorium in Belagavi

BELAGAVI, 3 APRIL

A day after Chief Minister Siddaramaiah requested his Maharashtra counterpart Devendra Fadnavis to release water to the rivers flowing through the northern region of Karnataka, local organisations opposed the neighbouring state's plan to construct an auditorium for Marathis in Belagavi in remembrance of those killed in the 1986 riots.

The Kannada Organisations Steering Committee (KOSC), in a letter to Siddaramaiah on Wednesday, mentioned the neighbouring state's plan of constructing an auditorium in memory of Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti (MES) activists killed in Belagavi, Nippani and Khanapur in the riots.

Maharashtra's Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Sharad Pawar, former minister Chhagan Bhujbal and several Shiva Sena leaders went to Belagavi on 1 June, 1986, and burnt to death a police constable and triggered riots that made police to open fire, in which around 12 people died and nearly 50 other persons were injured in stone pelting and lathi charge.

Describing those who died in the riots as "hutatmas" (martyrs), the MES organises a condolence meeting at Kaveri Circle on 17 January every year. It has recently proposed to construct an auditorium in Hindalaga locality in memory of the "hutatmas" with funds from Maharashtra.

Ashok Chandaragi, the convenor of the KOSC, said he has brought the matter to the notice of the chief minister and also submitted a memorandum to Belagavi Deputy Commissioner Mohammed Roshan. *—Salar News*

Bidar admin to withhold salaries of lax headmasters

BIDAR, 3 APRIL

The deputy director of the Department of School Education and Literacy, Saleem Pasha, has directed all block education officers (BEOs) in Bidar district to withhold the April salary of government school headmasters who fail to complete the online tasks assigned by the state government.

Tasks such as Apar progress updates, Aadhaar verification, Dropbox student data entry, updating student details and submitting the teachers' database report need to be completed online.

Those who fail to complete the process will not receive their April salary, Pasha, told **Salar News**. Despite several alerts, some headmasters have failed to complete these tasks. This has forced the District Project Coordinator (DPC) of Samagra Shiksha Karnataka, who is also the Deputy Director of Public Instruction (DDPI) to take action, Pasha said.

In 2024, Bidar district ranked last in online student data entry. *—Salar News*

TRANSLATED 22 BOOKS

Kannada activist, writer Narayana dies at 82

BENGALURU, 3 APRIL

- He taught Kannada at Vijaya College in Bengaluru for over 30 years and was active in almost all Kannada movements in the last half-a-century, starting from Gokak Movement in the early 1980s. He played a key role in the fight for Kannada getting the Classical Language tag.

Writer PV Narayana, who has been leading the Kannada movements for over 50 years, died here on Thursday due to age-related ailments. He was 82 years old.

Narayana was born in 1942 in Akkirampura village in Tumakuru district. A scholar, Narayana held two Masters in Arts, Kannada and English. He studied in Bengaluru, Tumakuru, Mysuru and Dharwad.

As a translator, Narayana brought to Kannada over 22 works from English and Telugu.

He taught Kannada at Vijaya College in Bengaluru for over 30 years and was active in almost all Kannada movements in the last half-a-century, starting from Gokak Movement in the early 1980s. He played a key role in the fight for Kannada getting the Classical Language tag.

Narayana also served as the dean of Kannada Classical Language Study Centre at Udayabhanu Kala Sangha.

Taking to X, both Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar have expressed their grief over his death.

"I am saddened by the demise of senior writer and researcher Dr P V Narayana. (Death of) Narayana, who was at the forefront of literary cultivation as well as the struggle for Kannada, is an irreparable loss to the Saraswat world," wrote the Chief Minister.

"Dr P V Narayana, a senior Kannada writer, a pioneer in the struggle for Kannada, and the honorary president of the BM Shree Foundation, passed away today," wrote Shivakumar.

Minister for Kannada and Culture Shivaraj Tangadagi too condoled his death. *—PTI*

PV Narayana ***PHOTO: X***

Leopard strays into B'luru home, family locks it inside

BENGALURU, 3 APRIL

PHOTO: ANI

A family in Jigani on the outskirts of Bengaluru had a close encounter with a leopard that wandered into their home on Thursday morning.

Acting swiftly, they locked the big cat inside and escaped unhurt, a forest official confirmed.

The incident occurred at Pilla Reddy Layout, where Venkatesh, his wife Venkatalakshmi and their son Nikhil reside in a rented house.

Jigani is located near the forested Bannerghatta National Park and people there frequently witness movement of wild animals, including leopards and elephants, the forest official said.

As the family prepared for the day, they were startled to find the leopard inside their home.

Overcoming their initial panic, they managed to rush out and secure the door from the outside.

Venkatesh then alerted neighbours and informed the police and the forest department.

A team of forest officials promptly arrived and tranquilised the animal to safely cage it.

Meanwhile, a large crowd gathered to witness the rescue operation.

Police were deployed to maintain order and prevent any untoward incident. *—PTI*

Plea seeks impleading 'Radha Rani' as plaintiff

PRAYAGRAJ, 3 APRIL

The Allahabad High court on Thursday would on 6 May pass order on a plea seeking to implead Radha Rani as plaintiff in the matter of Krishna Janmbhumi and Shahi Idgah dispute in Mathura. Justice Ram Manohar Narain Mishra is hearing the matter. Another application related to a different suit sought the use of "disputed structure" in place of "Shahi Idgah Mosque" in future proceedings and also in other connected cases pending before the court. The High Court on 5 March, 2025 allowed some amendments sought by the plaintiffs. The Hindu side has filed 18 suits for possession of land after removal of Shahi Idgah masjid and for the restoration of the temple that stood earlier aside from a permanent injunction. —*PTI*

Allahabad HC stays arrest against SP MP Azam Khan

PRAYAGRAJ, 3 APRIL

The Allahabad High Court has granted relief to former Samajwadi Party MP Mohammad Azam Khan in a 2007 house demolition case by staying his arrest. An FIR was registered in 2007 in Rampur against Khan by a person named Afsar Khan, who alleged that his house was demolished on the instance of the SP leader. The police after investigation submitted a final report in the 2007 itself which was pending before the court concerned. Afsar Khan died in 2017 and then his son Zulfiqar Khan filed a protest petition against the final report. Azam Khan submitted that the protest petition was filed after 18 years of closure report only because of political rivalry. —*PTI*

Court defers hearing Rahul's defamation case

SULTANPUR, 3 APRIL

A special court has postponed a defamation case against Rahul Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha, to 15 April due to the complainant's inability to provide a witness. Advocate Kashi Prasad Shukla, representing Gandhi, confirmed that proceedings could not go ahead. The case, filed by local BJP leader Vijay Mishra in 2018, centres on alleged derogatory remarks made by Gandhi against Amit Shah during Karnataka's assembly elections. Since its inception, the case has seen multiple delays, including Gandhi's non-appearances until a warrant was issued in December 2023. The Congress leader was granted bail earlier this year and has pleaded not guilty, asserting that the case is politically motivated. Further hearings have faced postponements due to a lawyers' strike and health issues affecting Gandhi's legal team. —*PTI*

DMK to move Supreme Court on Waqf Bill

Stalin says it disturbs religious harmony; Opposition AIADMK expresses solidarity with DMK

CHENNAI, 3 APRIL

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK President MK Stalin on Thursday said his party would challenge the Waqf Bill in the Supreme Court.

The CM, who came to the Assembly wearing a black badge to protest against the passing of the Bill, said adopting the amendment at 2am "at the behest of a few allies" despite the opposition of the majority parties in India, "is an attack on the structure of the Constitution."

"This is an act that disturbs religious harmony. To highlight this, we are participating in today's Assembly proceedings wearing black badges," the Chief Minister told the House.

"I would like to inform you that the Supreme Court will be approached on behalf of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) against this controversial amendment. Tamil Nadu will fight against the Union government's law which destroys the autonomy of the Waqf Board and threatens the minority Muslim population," Stalin said amidst thumping of desks by the Treasury.

Following the announcement, the Opposition AIADMK expressed solidarity with 'all steps' taken by the DMK on the issue while the BJP members staged a walkout from the Assembly House in protest.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin and other MLAs wore a black badge to protest the recent Waqf Amendment **PHOTO: PTI**

Stalin pointed out that the state Assembly had already passed a resolution on 27 March, against the proposed amendment as it would seriously affect the religious harmony of India besides the minority Muslim community.

He said it was highly condemnable that the amendment of the Waqf Act has been passed in the Lok Sabha despite 232 MPs voting against it and this was not an ordinary number, and the number may increase. Only 288 members voted in its favour, the Chief Minister said.

Speaking on the CM's announcement, former minister SP Velumani said the AIADMK supported Stalin's resolution on the Waqf Board Amendment Bill in the House, and had said that it should be amended to allay the apprehensions of Muslims.

"The Bill in its present form should be revoked. The AIADMK will be supportive of the state government on this issue," Velumani said. —*PTI*

When we were organising Maha Kumbh, the Waqf Board was claiming that the land in Prayagraj is also Waqf land. Is it the Waqf Board or the Land Mafia Board?

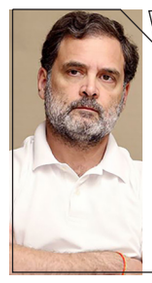
-Yogi Adithyanath, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister

If non-Muslims are going to be appointed on the Waqf Board, are they going to include me in Shirdi Saibaba (temple) trust or Tirupati temple trust?

-Imtiaz Jaleel, AIMM Leader

The concern about the Muslim community shown by the BJP and its allies supporting the Bill will put (Muhammad Ali) Jinnah to shame.

-Uddhav Thackeray, Shiv Sena (UBT) Chief



I was shocked to see that our Foreign Secretary was cutting a cake with the Chinese ambassador when China is sitting on 4,000 square kms of our territory.

-Rahul Gandhi, Leader of Opposition

The BJP brought the Waqf Bill to divide the country. When a new government is formed after ousting the BJP regime, we will bring an Amendment to nullify it.

-Mamata Banerjee, West Bengal Chief Minister

Stalin urges Modi to reclaim Katchatheevu

CHENNAI, 3 APRIL

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin has called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take decisive action to reclaim Katchatheevu island from Sri Lanka, emphasising its critical importance for safeguarding the traditional fishing rights of Tamil Nadu fishermen in the Palk Bay area.

In a letter to Modi, Stalin highlighted a resolution passed by the Tamil Nadu Assembly on 2 April 2025, which demands the retrieval of Katchatheevu, attributing the underlying issue to the 1974 Indo-Sri Lankan treaty. The Tamil Nadu government has historically opposed the Katchatheevu Agreement, with strong objections raised by Tamil Nadu MPs during its signing.

Stalin noted that the apprehension of fishermen and the seizure of their boats have created a climate of anxiety and instability in the coastal communities.

He pointed out that in 2024 alone, 530 Indian fishermen were arrested, with an additional 147 apprehended in the first three months of 2025. The chief minister highlighted the severe consequences faced by the fishermen, including harsh prison sentences and hefty fines, which have plunged them into poverty.

The Assembly's unanimous resolution urged the Union government to reconsider the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement, initiate discussions with Sri Lanka to secure the release of imprisoned fishermen and their boats, and ultimately reclaim Katchatheevu to protect their rights. —*PTI*

India & Thailand support free, open, rules-based order: Modi

BANGKOK, 3 APRIL

India and Thailand on Thursday decided to elevate their relations to the level of a strategic partnership with Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserting that both the countries support a free, open, inclusive, and rules-based order in Indo-Pacific, and believe in a policy of development, not expansionism.

Modi made the remarks at a joint press event with his Thai counterpart Paetongtarn Shinawatra after holding delegation-level talks.

"We have emphasized cooperation in the fields of tourism, culture, and education between India's northeastern states and Thailand. We discussed enhancing mutual trade, investment, and exchanges between businesses," Modi said about his talks with Shinawatra.

Modi asserted that Thailand holds a special place in India's 'Act East' Policy and the Indo-Pacific vision. Agreements have also been made for cooperation in MSME, handloom, and handicraft, he noted.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Thailand Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra at the BIMSTEC Summit, in Bangkok, Thailand **PHOTO: PTI**

"In the Indo-Pacific, we both support a free, open, inclusive, and rules-based order. We believe in the policy of vikaasvaad, not vistaarvaad (developmentism, not expansionism)," Modi said.

Modi also expressed condolences to the deceased in the earthquake on 28 March.

The Prime Minister will later join the BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) leaders from Thailand, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Myanmar and Bhutan to oversee the signing of the Agreement on Maritime Cooperation. —*PTI*

DALLEWAL VOWS TO REVIVE FARMERS' PROTEST

CHANDIGARH, 3 APRIL

Punjab farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal has announced plans to rebuild their protest following a police crackdown that evicted demonstrators from the Shambhu and Khanauri border points. Dallewal, a senior figure in the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM), has been on an indefinite hunger strike since 26 November, 2022, demanding a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for crops.

Speaking to reporters in Patiala after being discharged from a hospital, Dallewal expressed frustration over the government's actions, stating, "It is unprecedented that while talks were ongoing, farmers were detained." He accused the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government of betraying the farmers. Dallewal also vowed to continue his hunger strike until the' demands are met. —*PTI*

Shinde to check govt files before it goes to Fadnavis

MUMBAI, 3 APRIL

The Maharashtra government has implemented a new protocol requiring that all files be approved by Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde before reaching Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. The directive, issued by State Chief Secretary Sujata Saunik on 18 March, reinstates a practice from earlier in 2023 when files were vetted by the then Deputy Chief Ministers Ajit Pawar and Fadnavis prior to being submitted to former Chief Minister Shinde.

Since 26 July, 2023, the process involved files being transferred from Deputy CM Ajit Pawar, who heads the finance department, to Fadnavis, overseeing home, law, and judiciary, before final approval by Shinde. This change came about after Pawar, previously in the opposition, joined the Shinde government alongside Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) MLAs on 2 July 2023.

PHOTO: PTI

With the Mahayuti coalition's decisive victory in the November 2024 state assembly elections, Fadnavis has now ascended to the role of Chief Minister, following the BJP's acquisition of 132 seats, with Shiv Sena and NCP securing 57 and 41 seats, respectively.

Speculation regarding a "cold war" between Shinde and Fadnavis has emerged since the coalition, although both leaders have dismissed these claims. Conflicts have also arisen over appointments of guardian ministers, leading to Fadnavis rescinding his decisions in response to objections from Shinde. —*PTI*

DMK leader A Raja says party workers shouldn't wear kumkum

CHENNAI, 3 APRIL

Senior DMK leader A Raja has stirred controversy by advising party members to refrain from wearing 'kumkum' and wrist threads while donning the party dhoti. Speaking at a recent event in the Nilgiris district, Raja stressed the importance of political ideology and cited the AIADMK's collapse as an example of what happens to parties without a clear stance.

Raja expressed no opposition to faith, quoting DMK founder CN Annadurai's belief that divinity could be found in the smiles of the impoverished. However, he suggested that the adoption of symbols like 'pottu' (kumkum) and 'kayiru' (wrist thread) creates confusion between DMK members and members of the RSS. He urged the student wing of the party to "please remove the pottu" when representing the DMK.

PHOTO: PTI

In response to Raja's comments, PK Sekar Babu, the DMK's Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Minister, insisted that party president M.K. Stalin had not issued such directives, labelling Raja's viewpoint as personal.

Tamil Nadu BJP condemned Raja's statements, accusing him of trivialising Hindu beliefs and undermining communal harmony, questioning DMK's role in promoting unity while allegedly disrespecting religious sentiments. —*PTI*

US tariffs a mixed bag for India

India's exports to the US span 30 sectors: 24 in industry, 6 in agriculture

Hardest-hit Indian sectors

- US imports $9 billion worth of gems and jewellery.
- Electrical products & phones accounted for 14% of India's exports to the US.
- Engineering goods and specialty chemicals could be worst impacted. Automobiles exports from India to the US is just USD 2.8 billion, or 3 % of total exports.
- Garments, engineering goods, electronics, pharmaceuticals, and gems and jewellery accounted for 72.7% of the total goods trade between India and the US in FY24.
- While the IT sector is not directly hit, there may be indirect impacts from slower GDP growth due to higher tariffs.

Desi sectors to gain/stay stable

- **Textile:** US accounts for about 35% of Indian apparel exports (in 2024, it was **$5.2B**). India will do better than major competitors who have been hit harder – China (**54%**), Bangladesh, (**37%**).
- Agriculture is expected to remain stable.
- **Electronics and smartphones:** India is expected to do better than its manufacturing competitors China and Vietnam. India's Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes for smartphones and its parts have lured Apple and Samsung. This is likely to boos manufacturing.

Products exempt from import tariff

- Copper, steel & aluminium articles.
- Autos/auto parts.
- Pharmaceuticals.
- Semiconductors.
- Lumber.
- Energy and minerals products not found in the US.

How India fares against competitors

Other Asian economies have been hit even harder.

China's overall export tariff to the.US standing at **34** per cent.

- Japan at **24** per cent
- Thailand at **36** per cent
- Malaysia at **24** per cent
- Taiwan at **32** per cent
- South Korea at **25** per cent
- Vietnam at **46**%

Sector wise tariffs

- **Alcohol, wines, and spirits:** Worst hit with **122.10%** tariff hike. Exports are worth **$19.20** million.

- **Dairy products:** **38,23%** tariff differentia with trade worth **$181.49** million, making ghee, butter, and milk powder costlier.

- **Fish, meat and processed seafood:** **27.83%** tariff differential with exports worth **$2.55** billion. Shrimp, a major export, will become significantly less competitive.

- **Processed food, sugar and cocoa:** **24.99%** tariff increase with exports worth **$1.03** billion, making Indian snacks and confectionery expensive in the US.
- **Live animals and animal products:** **27.75%** tariff differential on USD **10.31** million in exports.
- **Footwear:** **15.56%** tariff hike.
- **Diamonds, gold and silver:** **13.32%** tariff hike with **$11.88** billion in exports, raising jewellery prices.
- **Edible oils:** **10.67%** tariff hike, increasing costs for coconut and mustard oil.

Research: Siddharth Saldanha; Design: Boopathy D

Wedding card helps cops nab 4 in robbery case

PALGHAR, 3 APRIL

A marriage invitation card has led police to solve a robbery case in Maharashtra's Palghar district, revealing the victim's own brother as the mastermind. On 28 March, Boru Khandu Binnar, 30, was travelling in a pickup when three men stopped him, claiming their motorbike had broken down. Believing their story, he halted to offer assistance. The robbers then attacked, using chilli powder to blind him and the driver, before fleeing with Rs 6,85,500 in cash. Investigators discovered traces of chilli powder and a wrapped marriage invitation card at the scene. Following this clue, police apprehended four suspects and recovered the stolen cash. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Elephant kills man in Chhattisgarh, 4th death in 4 days

BALRAMPUR, 3 APRIL

A 35-year-old man was tragically killed by a wild elephant in Balrampur district, Chhattisgarh, on Thursday. Mahendra Gond was monitoring his crops in Ghaghra village when the elephant attacked him, using its trunk to grab and trample him. While his companions managed to flee, forest and police officials arrived shortly after and transported the body for post-mortem. The victim's family, residing in nearby Kochli village, received an immediate relief of Rs 25,000, with further compensation of Rs 5.75 lakh to follow after formalities. This incident comes after two fatalities and one injury from elephant attacks in the Ramanujganj area earlier this week. Forest officials report increasing human-elephant conflicts in the state, with approximately 320 fatalities from such incidents over the past five years. *—PTI*

India to buy drone camera tech from Israeli firm

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

Indian defence firm Paras Defence and Space Technologies has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with MicroCon Vision of Israel, part of Controp and the Rafael Group, to bring advanced drone camera technology to the country, defence officials said in a statement on Thursday. The collaboration will position Paras Defence as the exclusive supplier of advanced drone camera technology in India at "much lower cost", it said. The Indian firm will bring indigenous content in these drone cameras and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) payloads, improving the country's self-reliance while lowering costs, the statement said. It will offer two models, whose usual import price is "around Rs 20 lakh and Rs 40 lakh per unit", the statement said. *—PTI*

Cops to attach assets of bank fraud accused

MUMBAI, 3 APRIL

In a first after the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) came into force, a Mumbai court has allowed the police to attach 21 properties worth Rs 167.85 crore, which belong to five accused in the alleged case of embezzlement at the New India Co-operative Bank. The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Mumbai Police which is probing the case has started the process of attachment after receiving a magistrate court's nod on Wednesday, said an official. These properties include a Slum Rehabilitation Project worth Rs 150 crore at Charkop, being developed by builder Dharmesh Paun, one of the arrested accused. This is the first such action under section 107 of the BNSS in Mumbai city, the EOW official said. *—PTI*

Tribals challenge Centre's forest encroachment data

Accuses NGT of 'doublespeak'; Slams Centre for FRA delay

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

According to the law, the rights of forest dwellers must first be identified, recognised and recorded under the FRA before considering the issue of encroachment and its extent **PHOTO: PTI**

An umbrella group representing over 150 tribal and forest dwellers' organisations in the country said on Thursday that the central government's data on forest area encroachment, submitted to the National Green Tribunal (NGT), is not authentic as it has yet to fully implement the Forest Rights Act (FRA).

The Campaign for Survival and Dignity, a national platform of tribal and forest dwellers' organisations in 10 states, including Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Gujarat, said in a statement that the NGT case poses another threat of mass evictions of tribals and other forest-dependent communities.

Researcher CR Bijoy said that when the Supreme Court ordered the eviction of 17 lakh families in 2019 after their applications were rejected in the anti-FRA case, the Union and state governments admitted that all rejected claims needed to be reviewed, as many were not rejected according to the law. Following nationwide protests, the court put the order on hold in February 2019 and directed a review of the rejected claims.

PTI on Tuesday reported that the Environment Ministry submitted a report to the NGT stating that, as of March 2024, a total of 13,05,668.1 hectares (or 13,056 sq km) of forest land was under encroachment in 25 states and Union Territories that have provided data so far.

Organisations alleged that the report showed the central government continues to "doublespeak" on the protection of tribal and forest-dependent communities' rights.

According to the law, the rights of forest dwellers must first be identified, recognised and recorded under the FRA. Only then can the issue of encroachment and its extent be considered.

However, FRA implementation has been "dragging on, stiffly resisted by the forest bureaucracy", for the last 16 years, the rights organisations said. They questioned how the government could present figures on encroachment when it had previously told the Supreme Court that the process of recognising and determining forest rights was incomplete and full of errors.

"How many of these 'encroachers' are actually forest rights holders? Is the government paving the way for another mass eviction order, this time through another court/tribunal?" they said. *—PTI*

Police stop a march by students and University of Hyderabad Teachers Association in Hyderabad on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Centre takes up T'gana forest row

NEW DELHI/HYDERABAD 3 APRIL

Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav on Thursday said the Centre has sent a notice to Telangana government seeking a factual report on alleged felling of trees on the 400-acre land in Kancha Gachibowli forest area near the University of Hyderabad (UoH) campus.

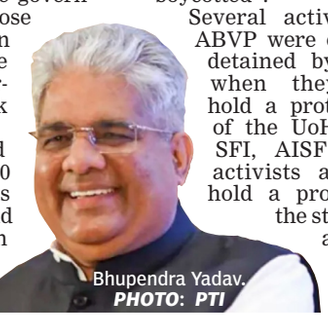
Replying during the Question Hour in Rajya Sabha, the minister said, "I fail to understand what kind of enmity the state government has with those trees and green area that they have to conduct an operation during dark of the night."

"The state felled more than 400 trees. Wild species are driven out and you can see that in videos and photos," he said.

"We have sent a notice to the chief secretary and we have also sought a factual report. We will certainly take action on this matter," he noted.

The Telangana High Court has posted the hearing for 7 April, referring to the Supreme Court's ruling that no tree felling should take place until further orders.

Meanwhile, the University of Hyderabad Students Union on Thursday began a relay hunger strike against the Telangana government, as classes remain "voluntarily boycotted".



Bhupendra Yadav. **PHOTO: PTI**

Several activists of the ABVP were on Thursday detained by the police when they tried to hold a protest in front of the UoH. Similarly, SFI, AISF and PDSU activists attempted to hold a protest outside the state secretariat but were taken away by police. *—PTI*

HOW BENGAL RECRUITMENT SCAM UNFOLDED

SC invalidated the appointment of 25,753 teachers in government schools in West Bengal. Here's a chronology of the events:

- **2016:** West Bengal School Service Commission initiates recruitment of State-Level Selection Test.
- **22 April, 2024:** Calcutta HC annuls appointment of **25,753** staff in government schools. It declares the recruitment "null and void" and orders a CBI probe.
- **29 April, 2024:** West Bengal moves SC, challenging HC order. SC stays the HC order for CBI probe but refuses to stay the cancelling of appointments.
- **7 May, 2024:** SC stays the HC order invalidating the appointments.
- **19 Dec, 2024:** The SC commences final hearing, asks state government why it created posts instead of weeding out black sheep.
- **10 Feb, 2025:** SC reserves verdict on 127 pleas.
- **3 April, 2025:** SC annuls appointment of **25,753** teachers and other staff in state-run and state-aided schools, orders fresh selection process.

An West Bengal government school employee tears up after the Supreme Court verdict **PHOTO: PTI**

Cash-at-judge's door: CBI failed in proving guilt, says court

CHANDIGARH, 3 APRIL

A special CBI court said the investigation agency has failed in proving guilt of the accused persons in the 2008 cash-at-judge's door case. Judge Alka Malik said the agency should have stuck to its initial stand of closing the matter.

On 29 March, the court acquitted four persons, including former Punjab and Haryana high court judge Nirmal Yadav, in connection with the case.

A packet containing Rs 15 lakh was allegedly wrongly delivered at the residence of another Punjab and Haryana High Court judge Nirmaljit Kaur on 13 August, 2008. It was alleged that the cash was a bribe for Justice Yadav.

The verdict held that the "prosecution has miserably failed to bring home the guilt to the accused persons and consequently, accused namely Ravinder Bhasin, Rajeev Gupta, Nirmal Singh and Nirmal Yadav, are hereby acquitted of the charges framed against them."

The acquittal order went on, "It would have been highly appreciable on the part of the (CBI) …to stick to its very first stance of filing the closure report in the matter in the court…, rather than fabricating a highly unworthy of trust evidence in the form of RK Jain whose testimony has been proved to be based upon all improvements, assumptions, presumptions, hypothesis and all falsehood." *—PTI*

Former Punjab and Haryana High Court judge Nirmal Yadav (C) after being acquitted by a special CBI court **PHOTO: PTI**

Kerala singer fined for waste dumping

KOCHI, 3 APRIL

Kerala's renowned playback singer MG Sreekumar has been fined Rs 25,000 by the Mulavukad Grama Panchayat for allegedly dumping waste into the Kochi backwaters.

The notice was issued after a tourist recorded a video showing a garbage bag being thrown into the backwaters from the singer's residence in the Mulavukad area.

The video was subsequently shared on social media and tagged Minister MB Rajesh, prompting a swift response.

Rajesh urged the public to report littering with evidence, through the government's WhatsApp number for appropriate action.

Following this, the local control room directed an inspection of the site, which confirmed the incident.

"After evaluating any response from the singer, further action may be taken if necessary," stated a senior panchayat official.

As of now, Sreekumar has yet to respond to the allegations. *—PTI*

SC refuses to relax ban on firecrackers in Delhi-NCR

The Supreme Court on Thursday refused to relax the ban imposed on the manufacture, storage and sale on firecrackers in Delhi-NCR noting air pollution levels had remained alarming for a considerable time. A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan said a large section of the population worked on streets and was the worst affected by pollution. Not everybody can afford an air purifier at their residence or place of work to fight pollution, the bench remarked. *—PTI*

SC asks HC to rule on Manipur GP terms

The Supreme Court said the High Court would decide whether the elected Gram Panchayat members, whose five-year tenure was over in Manipur, were entitled to continue in their posts in the event of the appointment of an administrative committee or an administrator. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh said it would like to have the benefit of the view of the High Court in the matter and set a three-month time frame to adjudicate the legal question. *—PTI*

STRING OF WOES

Fed up with severe water shortage, a man ties up several memorandums to his body as a mark of protest and crawls to meet the district collector in Bishan Khedi village, Bhopal, on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

WASTING COURT'S TIME

Split couples nag court to satisfy ego: HC

MUMBAI, 3 APRIL

The high court said the petition was a sheer abuse of the process and waste of precious time of the court **PHOTO: FREEPIK**

Spouses embroiled in matrimonial disputes go to extreme lengths to satisfy their ego, the Bombay High Court said, dismissing a petition filed by a woman seeking only her name to be mentioned as parent in the child's birth record.

Neither of the parents can exercise any right in respect of their child's birth record, Justices Mangesh Patil and YG Khobragade of the HC's Aurangabad bench said in the 28 March order.

The 38-year-old woman had filed a petition seeking a direction to the Aurangabad municipal authorities to record her name in the birth record of her child as a single parent and issue a birth certificate with only her name. The woman claimed her estranged husband had never even seen the face of his child.

The petition is a classic example of how a matrimonial dispute is a genesis for multiple litigations, the HC said and imposed a cost of Rs 5,000 on the petitioner.

The high court, however, said the mother cannot insist as a right to be mentioned as a single parent in the child's birth certificate.

"Neither of the parents can exercise any right in respect of the child's birth record," it said.

"This demonstrates as to what extent parents, embroiled in a matrimonial dispute, can go to satisfy their ego," the HC said.

"The relief being claimed, clearly demonstrates that she can go to the extent of treating her child as if it is a property in respect of which she can claim some rights, ignoring the interest and welfare of the child," the bench said in the order.

The high court said it has no doubt that the petition was a "sheer abuse of the process and waste of precious time of the court". *—PTI*

DNA shows paternity, not lack of consent: HC

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

The Delhi High Court has overturned a rape conviction, stating that while a DNA report confirmed the man as the biological father of the child, it did not provide evidence of non-consensual intercourse. Justice Amit Mahajan stated that the pregnancy alone was insufficient to substantiate a rape charge, which hinges on the absence of consent.

The court noted discrepancies in the prosecution's case, describing it as "highly improbable". The timing of the FIR, filed without explanation over a year after the alleged incidents, raised questions about its validity, suggesting it may have been influenced by societal pressures.

Justice Mahajan further highlighted that the woman's inconsistent testimony and lack of medical evidence undermined her credibility. Despite being an adult living with her family, she failed to clarify her delay in reporting the alleged assaults, and her continuing visits to the accused's home for games raised doubts about claims of coercion.

The man, who was sentenced to ten years in prison in December 2022, argued that their relationship was consensual. The court ultimately ruled that reasonable doubt remained, emphasising that convictions must be based on proof beyond reasonable doubt. *—PTI*

TAKING A STAND

Protesters shout slogans during a rally calling for impeached South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol to step down, near the Constitutional Court in Seoul, South Korea on Thursday. Months after Yeol imposed martial law and triggered South Korea's worst political crisis in decades, the court will on Friday decide whether to uphold the suspended president's impeachment or return him to office. ***PHOTO: PTI***

Trump's tariffs draw flak from world leaders

Sweeping new tariffs announced by US President Donald Trump provoked dismay, threats of countermeasures and urgent calls for talks to find ways to rescind the stiff new import taxes imposed on goods from countries around the globe.

But responses Thursday were measured, highlighting a lack of appetite for an outright trade war with the world's biggest economy.

Trump said Wednesday the import taxes, ranging from 10 per cent to 49 per cent, would do to US trading partners what they have long done to the US He maintains they will draw factories and jobs back to the United States.

"Taxpayers have been ripped off for more than 50 years," he said. "But it is not going to happen anymore."

Trump's announcement of a new 20 per cent tariff on the European Union drew a sharp rebuke from European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, who said it was a "major blow to the world economy."

"The consequences will be dire for millions of people around the globe," von der Leyen said. Groceries, transport and medicines will cost more, she said while visiting Uzbekistan. "And this is hurting, in particular, the most vulnerable citizens."

Von der Leyen held off, however, from announcing new retaliatory measures.

The makers of Italy's Parmigiano Reggiano cheese say the new tariffs just mean US consumers will pay more, since the protected designation cheese doesn't really compete with US made parmesan. "Americans continued to choose us even when the price went up" after an earlier round of Trump tariffs in 2019, said Nicola Bertinelli, president of the Parmigian Reggiano Consortium.

"Putting tariffs on a product like ours, only increases the price for American consumers, without protecting local producers," he said.

Analysts say there's little to be gained from an all-out trade war, for the United States or other countries, since higher tariffs can lower growth and raise inflation.

President Donald Trump signed an executive order during an event to announce new tariffs in the Rose Garden of the White House on Wednesday ***PHOTO: PTI***

"If Trump really imposes high tariffs, Europe will have to respond, but the paradox is that the EU would be better off doing nothing," said Matteo Villa, a senior analyst at Italy's Institute for International Political Studies.

Europe's strategy so far has been to limit retaliation to early tariff rounds to just a few politically sensitive goods such as bourbon and motorcycles in an attempt to push the US to the negotiating table, rather than escalate an all-out trade war that could cripple its export-dependent economy.

Economists say the next target could be US tech companies. They fall into the services category, where the US exports more than it imports to Europe.

"We're going to target the services, for example, digital services which are not being taxed for now and could be, the Google, Apple Facebook, Amazon and Microsoft, for example," French government spokesperson Sophie Primas said about the EU's response.

British Prime Minister Kier Starmer said the UK government would react with "cool and calm heads," telling business leaders in London that he hopes to get the tariffs lifted with a trade deal. "Nobody wins in a trade war," he said.

Asian countries that are among the biggest exporters to the US pledged to act fast to support automakers and other businesses.

Japan, America's closest ally in Asia, plans to closely analyse the US tariffs and their impact, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi said, while refraining from talk of retaliation.

China's Commerce Ministry said Beijing would "resolutely take countermeasures to safeguard its own rights and interests," without saying exactly what it might do. With earlier rounds of tariffs China reacted by imposing higher duties on US exports of farm products, while limiting exports of minerals used for high-tech industries such as electric vehicles.

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said she would wait to see how Trump's announcement will affect Mexico, which like Canada was spared for goods already qualified under their free trade agreement with the United States, though previously announced 25 per cent tariffs on auto imports took effect Thursday.

A 29 per cent tariff imposed on the tiny South Pacific outpost of Norfolk Island came as a shock. The Australian territory has a population of around 2,000 people and the economy revolves around tourism.

"To my knowledge, we do not export anything to the United States," Norfolk Island Administrator George Plant, the government's representative on the island, told the AP. "We don't charge tariffs on anything. So we're scratching our heads here." *—PTI*

SALAR

Katchatheevu, the islet in middle of a political storm

A tiny island, Katchatheevu, is once again being debated intensely, thanks to yet another demand from Tamil Nadu calling for its retrieval, vis-a-vis the vexed fishermen issue. The DMK dominated state Assembly adopted a resolution on 2 April.

Katchatheevu is an islet in the Palk Strait, roughly between Jaffna in Sri Lanka and Rameswaram in India. Since 1921, talks had been held between authorities of both the countries on rights over Katchatheevu.

Tamil Nadu had always pointed out that the islet, before independence, had been under the Raja of Ramnad's administration and that Tamil Nadu fishermen always had traditional fishing rights in that area.

Eventually, in June 1974, the island was ceded to Sri Lanka by the Indian government when Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister. Agreements were signed on 26 and 28 June, 1974 and on 23 March, 1976. Though over 50 years have gone by since the ceding of the island, it continues to be a topic of debate since it involves the rights of fishermen and the innumerable instances of arrest, assault and deaths of fishermen allegedly at the hands of Sri Lankan Navy.

The Chief Minister of the day routinely writes to the Centre seeking release of fishermen and release of seized boats.

Ceding of Katchatheevu had always been cited as the cause of the travails of the fishing community and routinely demands are made to take back the island from Sri Lanka and stakeholders, including political parties and fishermen associations, are on the same page on these matters. BJP Tamil Nadu chief K Annamalai had said that the party wants to retrieve Katchatheevu from Sri Lanka, not for the sake of territory but to ensure a lasting solution to fishermen's problems.

The AIADMK had always accused the DMK of doing nothing to stop the ceding of the island as it held power at that time (1967-1976) and the DMK had defended itself all the time saying it firmly opposed the move. In the 1971 election, the DMK allied with the Indira Gandhi-led Congress.

AIADMK supremo J Jayalalithaa and later, the DMK patriarch M Karunanidhi had filed petitions in the Supreme Court challenging the Centre's ceding of Katchatheevu. Over a decade ago, attorney general Mukul Rohatgi had told the Supreme Court that India may have to go to war to get back the island from Sri Lanka. Both the late Jayalalithaa and Karunanidhi had cited the Supreme Court ruling in the Berubari Union case (1960) of a prior Parliamentary approval via a constitutional amendment for ceding of any territory to a foreign country.

The Assembly has passed resolutions four times urging the Centre to get back Katchatheevu from Sri Lanka. The first was passed on 3 October, 1991 when Jayalalithaa was the Chief Minister and the second was adopted in 2013, again when she was at the helm. The third was passed on 5 December, 2014 when O Panneerselvam (AIADMK at that time) was the CM and the fourth resolution moved by chief minister MK Stalin was passed on 2 April, 2025.

CMs of Tamil Nadu had also spoken and officially written to the Centre many times demanding the same.

Ahead of the 2024 LS polls, Katchatheevu became a hotly debated issue in Tamil Nadu as state BJP President Annamalai, based on RTI inputs, alleged that Jawaharlal Nehru, was inclined to give away the islet to Sri Lanka.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had last year cited documents that became public via the RTI, and said what they showed was that from 1973 onwards, the Central government and Foreign ministry held continuous and detailed consultation with the Tamil Nadu government and the then CM Karunanidhi.

He had said records exist of the then foreign secretary keeping Karunanidhi fully informed of the talks between the two countries. Jaishankar had also accused the DMK of conniving with the Congress in 1974 and thereafter in creating the situation, which has been a cause of "great concern."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi just ahead of the Lok Sabha polls in 2024, raked up the issue to target the Congress. "Eye opening and startling! New facts reveal how Congress callously gave away #Katchatheevu."Modi wrote on social media.

Congress Chief Mallikarjun Kharge had dubbed it poll desperation. BJP's attempt to use the resolved Katchatheevu issue as a "political tool" won't work, senior Congress leader P Chidambaram had said. *—PTI*

Former PM Indira Gandhi ceded the isle to Sri Lanka in the 1970s ***PHOTO: ANI***

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Even in 2025, Indian universities are unable to shake off caste bias

When Amit (name changed) was admitted to the Indian Institute of Technology in Delhi, he was elated.

"I was excited to learn at such an elite institute and the opportunities it would give me," he told DW.

With tough entrance exams and lucrative high-paying job offers for graduates, the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) are among India's most prestigious schools.

The IITs are a network of 23 universities known for their excellence in research, science and technology studies. Their acceptance rate is infamously competitive, ranging between 0.5 per cent and 2.5 per cent across the network of institutes.

"What I was not prepared for was the ingrained casteism on campus. In my first year, I lost a lot of weight and constantly felt like I did not belong there. I decided to stick it out, but it hasn't been easy," Amit said.

"After coming to know that I am from the reserved category, my classmates started treating me differently," he added, referring to affirmative action policies enshrined in the Indian constitution to uplift communities that are historically part of the lowest rungs of the country's caste hierarchy.

Caste determines a person's social status in many South Asian societies, and those considered to be from "lower" castes face systemic discrimination.

"The upper-caste classmates had their own cliques, and I felt excluded and isolated. People made passing comments on how there were more deserving candidates, and I only got admission due to reservation.

Amit's experience is not unique. A 2019 study from the IIT Delhi — the most recent available — found that 75 per cent of students from historically disadvantaged caste groups faced discrimination through caste-based remarks.

The same study found that about 59 per cent of students from the General Category either agreed with or were indifferent to these caste-based remarks.

Government-funded institutions reserve a percentage of seats for historically disadvantaged groups as part of their affirmative action efforts. However, many upper-caste students and faculty say that this undermines meritocracy.

"IITs are high-value institutions where traditional upper caste, middle class people want to go. They want these places to be their monopolies, and they were until some time ago, when reservations were not

Student groups protesting alleging caste-discrimination after the suicide of Darshan Solanki, a first-year student at Indian Institute of Technology Bombay in 2023 ***PHOTO: ANI***

really implemented," Surinder Singh Jodhka, professor of sociology at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, told DW.

He added that students from underprivileged groups "are seen [as] being entitled on the basis of reservations, whereas students from the general category see it as an achievement because of their merit."

"This binary is constructed in a strange way, but it has come to be institutionalized. It has been taken for granted, and it goes all the way from admission to job recruitment," Jodhka said.

Many Indian surnames are associated with caste background and identity.

"There is a sort of segregation among students on caste lines. Even if some upper caste classmates are friendlier toward you, they still make casual casteist remarks, call us 'reservation kids' or share posts against reservations on social media," a student from IIT Bombay told DW.

"Lately, IIT campuses have started having chain restaurants and coffee shops inside the campus. These places are unaffordable to a lot of us from reserved categories, and further creates an atmosphere of segregation," he added.

The case of Darshan Solanki, an 18-year-old first-year student who died by suicide in 2023, is still fresh in the minds of many of the students.

His family and friends reported him facing caste discrimination on campus in the days leading up to his death. However, a report by the university found "no specific evidence" of caste-based discrimination.

"There is often the narrative that these students took their own lives due to academic pressures or other problems. They never want to look into our experiences that make it so hard to focus on academics," Amit said.

In recent years, several IITs have set up Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe (SC/ST) cells to tackle caste discrimination. These bodies are supposed to address student complaints and ensure reservation policies are properly implemented in admissions and hiring.

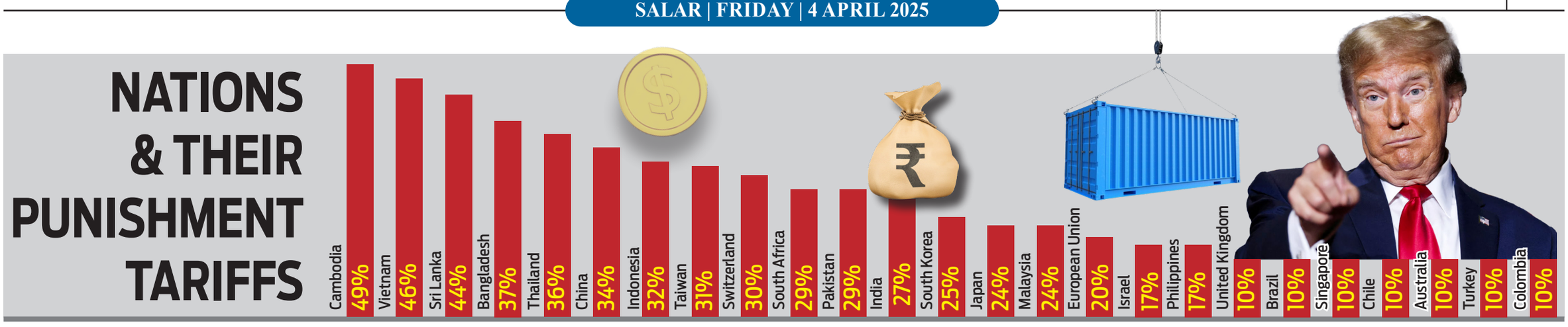
Some institutes, like IIT Bombay, have gone further, introducing caste awareness courses and conducting surveys to understand discrimination on campus.

India's Ministry of Education directed government-funded universities, including IITs, to fill all reserved faculty positions by September 2022.

However, data from a right to information document obtained by the Ambedkar Periyar Phule Study Circle (APPSC), a student advocacy group fromed at IIT Bombay, showed that 14 departments at IIT Delhi and eight at IIT Bombay had no faculty members from reserved categories as of 2023.

In response to this, IIT Bombay's director Shireesh Kedare released a statement saying the institute was making efforts to hire top-quality candidates, and often candidates applied from the general category instead of reserved.

"Yes, having a diverse faculty will really help. However, the change must happen at the top, as well. More IIT directors need to be aware and proactive about caste issues. The SC/ST cell should ideally work for the students, but it works for the university," said Narayana Sukumar, a professor of political science at Delhi University. *—DW News*



TRUMP UNLEASHES TARIFF WAR

POTUS says it will restore fairness as others 'loot, rape' US

WASHINGTON, 3 APRIL

President Donald Trump on Wednesday unveiled sweeping new tariffs on nearly all US trading partners, including a 34 per cent tax on imports from China and a 20 per cent tariff on goods from the European Union, setting the stage for potential trade wars.

The announcement, made in the Rose Garden, targets nations with significant trade surpluses with the US, while introducing a baseline 10 per cent tariff on imports from all countries, citing an economic emergency.

Trump framed the tariffs as a move to revive American manufacturing and restore fairness to global trade, calling the global system "looted, pillaged, raped, and plundered" by other nations. The new measures are a significant escalation of his "America First" trade policies and could trigger a dramatic shift in international economic relations.

The tariffs, which include taxes on hundreds of billions of dollars worth of goods, mark a historic tax increase and could have a profound impact on American consumers. With essentials such as housing, automobiles, and clothing expected to become more expensive, the action risks stoking inflation and economic slowdown, potentially hurting middle-class families.

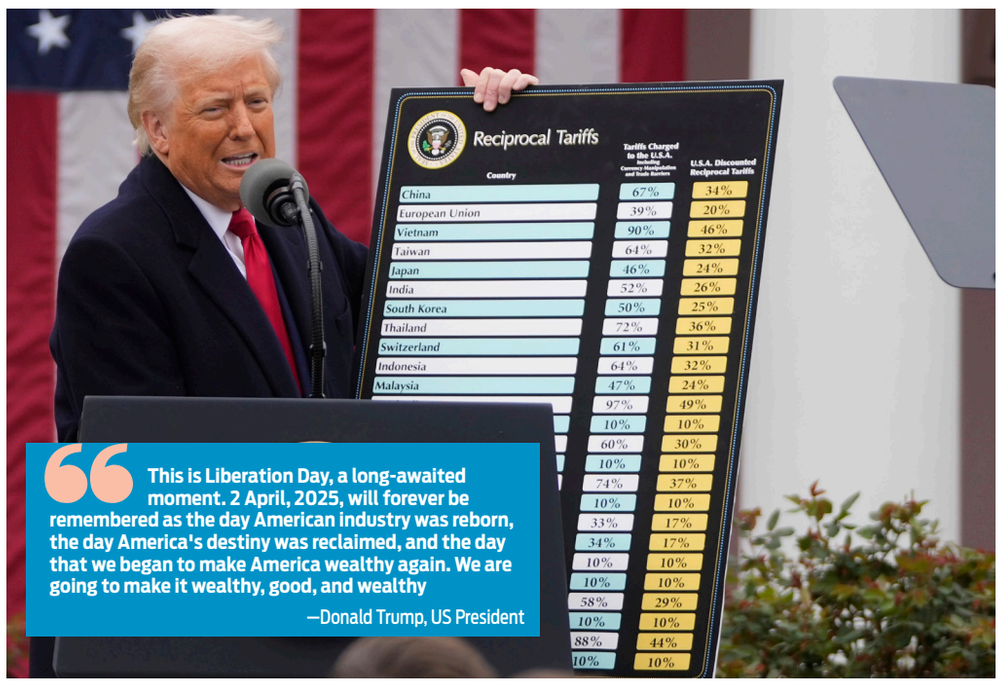
While Trump has promised that the tariffs will create jobs and reduce the trade deficit, the move has drawn sharp criticism from both sides of the aisle. Several Republican lawmakers, especially those from farm and border states, have expressed concern about the economic consequences, including job losses and rising prices for consumers.

Scott Lincicome and Colin Grabow of the Cato Institute warned that the new tariffs could spark a trade war akin to the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of 1930, which exacerbated the Great Depression. The new measures are set to raise US tariff rates to approximately 22 per cent on average by 2024, up from 2.5 per cent, according to analysts at Fitch Ratings.

The White House justifies the tariffs as a necessary step to address a $1.2 trillion trade imbalance. However, these new rates could prompt retaliatory tariffs from affected countries, worsening the global trade environment. Already, the European Union has imposed taxes on $28 billion worth of US goods in response to US steel and aluminium tariffs, while China has warned that protectionism leads to no winners.

Trump's move to impose these tariffs without Congressional approval is drawing political fire. Democrats argue that the president should not have unilateral authority to raise taxes, particularly when it could lead to a significant cost burden for American families.

The tariffs are set to go into effect starting Saturday, with the higher rates beginning April 9. —*PTI*


Reciprocal Tariffs
Country
Tariffs Charged to the U.S.A. including Currency Manipulation and Trade Barriers
U.S.A. Discounted Reciprocal Tariffs
China 67% 34%
European Union 39% 20%
Vietnam 90% 46%
Taiwan 64% 32%
Japan 46% 24%
India 52% 26%
South Korea 50% 25%
Thailand 72% 36%
Switzerland 61% 31%
Indonesia 64% 32%
Malaysia 47% 24%
97% 49%
10% 10%
60% 30%
10% 10%
74% 37%
10% 10%
33% 17%
34% 17%
10% 10%
10% 10%
58% 29%
10% 10%
88% 44%
10% 10%
This is Liberation Day, a long-awaited moment. 2 April, 2025, will forever be remembered as the day American industry was reborn, the day America's destiny was reclaimed, and the day that we began to make America wealthy again. We are going to make it wealthy, good, and wealthy
—Donald Trump, US President

President Donald Trump speaks during an event to announce new tariffs in the Rose Garden at the White House, on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Violent storms, tornadoes hit parts of US, 1 killed

WASHINGTON, 3 APRIL

Violent storms sweeping through the South and Midwest have resulted in at least one fatality, widespread power outages, and significant damage. Tornado warnings were issued across Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and Mississippi as severe weather persisted. A tornado emergency was declared around Blytheville, Arkansas, where debris was reported to reach over 25,000 feet. In Kentucky, a tornado struck Jeffersontown, injuring four people. More than 182,000 customers lost power as storms moved through Indiana, with some areas seeing up to 15 inches of rain forecast. The National Weather Service warned of significant flash flooding risks over the coming days, urging residents to be vigilant as the severe weather system continues to develop. Additionally, Michigan is still recovering from an ice storm that left over 122,000 without power. —*PTI*

Four killed as boat carrying migrants sinks near Lesbos

ATHENS, 3 APRIL

A incident occurred off the northern coast of Lesbos, where a boat carrying migrants capsized, resulting in the deaths of four individuals, including two children, as reported by Greece's coast guard on Thursday. Rescue efforts have successfully located 23 survivors and recovered the bodies of two women and two children—a boy and a girl. The capsizing happened early Thursday morning, and although weather conditions were reportedly good, the cause of the incident remains unclear. The search operation continues with the involvement of three coast guard vessels, an air force helicopter, and assistance from nearby boats. Greece remains a primary entry point into the EU for migrants fleeing conflict and poverty, with frequent dangerous crossings from the Turkish coast to Greek islands. —*PTI*

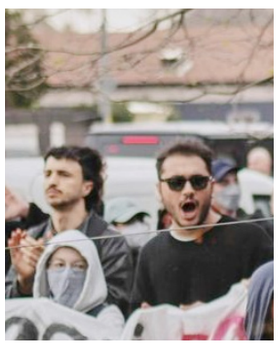


PHOTO: AP

Turkey detains 11 for stir backing Istanbul mayor

ISTANBUL, 3 APRIL

Turkish police detained 11 individuals on Thursday following their support for a one-day shopping boycott in protest against the imprisonment of Istanbul's opposition Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu. The Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office had issued arrest warrants for 16 suspects in connection with allegations of "hatred and discrimination" and "inciting public hostility," as reported by state-run Anadolu news agency. Among those detained was actor Cem Yigit Uzumoglu, known for his role in the Netflix series Rise of Empires: Ottoman. The arrests follow large-scale protests that erupted after Imamoglu was jailed on corruption charges deemed politically motivated by critics. Since his arrest on 19 March, approximately 2,000 individuals have been detained, with nearly 316 currently in custody pending trial amidst allegations of mistreatment. —*PTI*

Tariffs will hurt people, says EU

US President Donald Trump's announcement of a new 20 per cent tariff on the European Union drew a sharp rebuke from European Commission President **Ursula von der Leyen**. She said it was a major blow to the world economy and the consequences "will be dire for millions of people." Groceries, transport and medicines will cost more, she said, "And this is hurting, in particular, the most vulnerable citizens." —*PTI*

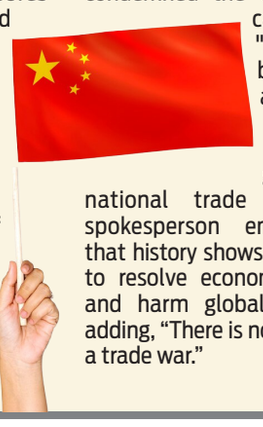
Tariffs scare investors, global markets bleed red

Global markets tumbled Thursday following US President Donald Trump's announcement of significant tariff hikes on imports from several countries. Asian and European stocks plunged, with US futures also sharply lower, raising concerns about a potential global recession. The future for the S&P 500 fell 3.1 per cent, and the Dow Jones dropped 2.6 per cent, signaling a tough opening for US markets. European indices saw major losses: Germany's DAX fell 1.7 per cent, France's CAC 40 dropped 1.8 per cent, and the UK's FTSE 100 declined by 1.2 per cent. In Asia, Japan's Nikkei 225 fell 2.8 v, while South Korea's Kospi lost 1.1 per cent. Hong Kong's Hang Seng and Shanghai Composite both closed lower as well. Oil prices also dipped, with U.S. crude falling $2.63 to $69.08 per barrel. Market volatility reflects growing concerns over the long-term economic impact of the escalating trade war. —*PTI*

25% tariffs on car imports

Trump confirmed the 25% tariff on all foreign made-automobiles. The auto tariffs will cover more than $460 billion worth of imports of vehicles and auto parts annually. —*PTI*

Fuming China vows to retaliate



China has vowed to take "resolute" countermeasures against President Donald Trump's new tariffs on its imports, totaling over USD 438 billion, after the US imposed a 34 per cent tariff on Chinese goods. The tariffs, announced on Wednesday, are part of Trump's broader trade policy to address perceived imbalances and bolster US manufacturing. China's Ministry of Commerce condemned the US. move, calling it "unilateral bullying" and an attempt to disregard international trade rules. A spokesperson emphasized that history shows tariffs fail to resolve economic issues and harm global stability, adding, "There is no winner in a trade war." — *PTI*

'P****d' at Putin, but no tariffs

As the Trump administration launched its "reciprocal tariffs" on imports to his country, the US president has followed what has been termed as "punishing allies and sparing adversaries". While it imposed new tariffs on close allies and partners, such as Japan, South Korea and India, the administration spared Russia and North Korea. The exemption of Russia from the list came as a surprise to many, especially after Trump threatened additional sanctions on Russian oil if Moscow failed to end the war in Ukraine soon. Last week, the US President said he was "very angry" and "p****d off" at Russian President Vladimir Putin when he criticised the credibility of Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy. —*Agencies*

Trump does not even spare penguins

Trump has imposed a 10 per cent tariff on goods from uninhabited volcanic islands near Antarctica, home only to glaciers, penguins and seals. Heard Island and McDonald Islands, which rank among the most isolated places, require a two-week boat journey from Perth, and no human has reportedly set foot there in nearly a decade. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese responded to the announcement, saying, "Nowhere on earth is safe." Albanese added said it is "not the act of a friend", but said that his country will not retaliate to the 10 per cent tariffs with its own levies. —*PTI*

Bibi's aides arrested for 'Qatargate'

TEL AVIV, 3 APRIL

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office is once again ensnared in scandal after police arrested two of his close associates this week on suspicion of accepting money from Qatar to promote a positive image of the Arab state in Israel.

The affair has gripped Israelis because Qatar, a country that many view as a patron of Hamas, and which has no formal diplomatic ties to Israel, appears to have penetrated the highest corridors of power.

Qatar, which is a key mediator for Hamas in its ceasefire negotiations with Israel, denies backing the militant group. Netanyahu has given a statement to police on the matter but is not a suspect in the case, which he says is baseless and meant to topple his rule.

It is believed that the investigation is just the latest scandal to roil Netanyahu. Critics say that Netanyahu, the country's longest-serving prime minister, has worked in recent years to undermine Israel's state institutions, including its judiciary. Most recently, they point to his attempt to dismiss the head of Israel's domestic security agency, which is also investigating his office's alleged links to Qatar.

Meanwhile, Netanyahu arrived in Hungary's capital on Thursday morning despite a warrant for his arrest issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC). —*PTI*

Israeli strikes kill 50 in Gaza

Israeli air strikes killed at least 55 people across the Gaza Strip, hospital officials said on Thursday, a day after senior government officials said Israel would seize large areas of Gaza and establish a new security corridor across the Palestinian territory. Israel has vowed to escalate the war with Hamas until it returns all hostages, disarms and leaves the territory. —*PTI*

Myanmar quake toll rises to 3,085

BANGKOK, 3 APRIL

The toll from the earthquake that hit Myanmar nearly a week ago rose Thursday to 3,085 as search and rescue teams found more bodies, the military-led government said, and humanitarian aid groups scrambled to provide survivors medical care and shelter. The military said another 4,715 people have been injured and 341 are missing.

The epicentre of Friday's 7.7 magnitude earthquake was near Mandalay, Myanmar's second-largest city. It brought down thousands of buildings, buckled roads and destroyed bridges in multiple regions.

The WHO said that according to its initial assessment, four hospitals and one health centre had been completely destroyed while another 32 hospitals and 18 health centres had been partially damaged.

A mobile hospital from India and a joint Russian-Belarusian hospital also were now operating in Mandalay.

With many left homeless by the earthquake, and many others staying away from their homes over fears ongoing aftershocks will bring them down, workers in Naypyitaw laboured in the 40 degree Celsius busily erected big tents in open fields to provide some shelter. —*PTI*

Rubio lands in Brussels for NATO talks

BRUSSELS, 3 APRIL

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and the Trump administration's new envoy to NATO arrived on Thursday in Brussels, where the alliance's top diplomats are hoping they'll shed light on US security plans in Europe.

European allies and Canada are deeply concerned by President Donald Trump's readiness to draw closer to Russian leader Vladimir Putin, who sees NATO as a threat, as the US works to broker a ceasefire in Ukraine.

Recent White House comments and insults directed at NATO allies Canada and Denmark – as well as the military alliance itself – have raised alarm and confusion, especially with new US tariffs targeting US friends and foes alike.

Since Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth warned last month that US priorities lie elsewhere, Europe has waited to learn how big a military gap could be and how fast it may happen. In Europe and Canada, governments are working on plans to take over more load, while trying to ensure that no security vacuum is created if US leaves. —*PTI*

CAUGHT IN US

Indian gets 35-yr jail for child porn

EDMOND, 3 APRIL

An Indian citizen in the US has been sentenced to 35 years in jail for sexually harassing several children on a social media app. He posed as a teenager to gain his victims' trust and threatened and extorted them with child pornography to have his way, a media report said.

Kurremula was charged in 2024 April.

The convict, 31-year-old Sai Kumar Kurremula, was living at Edmond in Oklahoma on an immigrant visa. US Attorney Robert Troester was quoted in the report as saying, "He has been sentenced to serve 420 months in federal prison for the sexual exploitation of three children and transportation of child pornography."

PHOTO: FREEPIK

After serving his term in a federal prison, he will also have to undergo a lifetime term of supervised release, the report said.

US District Judge Charles Goodwin noted that Kurremula inflicted trauma on his victims that will last throughout their lives.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) launched an investigation in October 2023 into a social media account that was sexually exploiting minor girls. The account's Internet Protocol address led authorities to Kurremula, the report said.

It is also reported that Kurremula exploited at least 19 minors on the app. —*PTI*

Gold hits record high of Rs 94,350 per gm in Delhi

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

Gold prices climbed Rs 200 to hit a fresh peak of Rs 94,350 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday amid persistent buying by jewellers and stockists, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Rising for the fifth straight day, gold of 99.5 per cent purity rose Rs 200 to establish a lifetime high of Rs 93,900 per 10 grams. However, silver prices plunged Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,00,500 per kg from Wednesday's closing level of Rs 1,01,500 per kg. In the international markets, spot gold dipped USD 43.39, or 1.38 per cent, to USD 3,089.64 per ounce. On Wednesday, it had hit a fresh peak of USD 3,167.71 per ounce after US President Donald Trump unleashed tariff barrage on over 60 countries *—PTI*

Rupee pares initial losses, holds itself against US dollar

MUMBAI, 3 APRIL

The rupee pared its initial losses and settled for the day higher by 22 paise at 85.30 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday as the greenback weakened against its major peers after President Donald Trump unleashed reciprocal tariffs on about 60 countries. The domestic unit had witnessed a knee jerk reaction in early trade but soon gained the lost ground and ended the day on a positive note, after the US announced 27 per cent reciprocal tariffs on India, saying New Delhi imposes high import duties on American goods. Experts, however, said that India is better-placed than its competitors, who also face increased levies. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 85.77 then touched an intraday high of 85.30 and a low of 85.78 against the greenback. The unit ended the session at 85.30 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a gain of 22 paisa from its previous closing level *—PTI*

Hindustan Power bags 425 MW solar project from UPPCL

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

Hindustan Power on Thursday said it has secured a 425 MW solar project from Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL). The Letter of Award (LoA) was issued by UPPCL following a competitive e-reverse auction. As per the power purchase agreement, UPPCL will procure power from this solar project for a fixed tariff over a 25-year period. The project is expected to achieve commissioning within 24 months from the date of signing of the agreement. "With this win, the company will contribute to Uttar Pradesh's growing demand for sustainable energy solutions," Ratul Puri, chairman of Hindustan Power said. The company plans to build a 5 GW energy portfolio by 2028.*—PTI*

Dabur sees contraction in Q4 profits

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

FMCG major Dabur expects its revenue to decline in March quarter impacted by slowdown in urban markets and contraction of 150-175 basis points in operating profit margin due to inflation. Dabur expects its consolidated revenue to be "flattish" during Q4 FY25, the company said on 2 April. Dabur India's shares tumbled on Thursday morning to its 52-week low at Rs 458.25. Though it revived later to Rs 464.55, it was 6.25 per cent lower from the previous close. Its key international markets in MENA region, Egypt and Bangladesh are likely to perform strongly.The company remains committed to driving profitable growth and expects a recovery aided by incentives announced by the Union government *—PTI*

INDIA INC SAYS IMPACT OF TRUMP TARIFFS 'LIMITED'

Real impact may be gauged after a proper assessment

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

US President Donald Trump's announcement of 27 per cent reciprocal tariffs on India would bring a major realignment in global trade and manufacturing value chains, while the country's resilient economy may feel a marginal impact, industry bodies said on Thursday. India Inc. believes the real impact of the announcements may be gauged only after a proper assessment.

Tariffs unveiled by Trump would bring a realignment in global trade and manufacturing value chains. India is placed in the middle of the tariff rates at 27 per cent in addition to 10 per cent baseline duties, which needs to be assessed for real impact", said ASSOCHAM President Sanjay Nayar.

''Net-net, it appears India's export competitiveness to the US market stands far less impacted on a relative basis. Yet our industry should make concerted efforts to increase export efficiency and value addition, to mitigate impact of these tarriffs,'' he said.

India's robust industrial competitiveness will balance the impact of US tariffs, and GDP will see only a 0.1 per cent impact in the short term, said PHDCCI President Hemant Jain.

However, in the medium term, as the policy takes full effect, this shortfall will be negated, he added.

"We expect continuing collaboration with US through a well-negotiated bilateral trade agreement," Nayar said.*—PTI*

Tariffs unveiled by Trump would bring a realignment in global trade and manufacturing value chains ***PHOTO: PTI***

Markets drop amid IT sell-off and Don's tariff hike

MUMBAI, 3 APRIL

The benchmark indices, Sensex and Nifty, closed lower on Thursday amid a global sell-off, triggered by US President Donald Trump's announcement of reciprocal tariffs on 60 countries.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped by 322.08 points, or 0.42 per cent, finishing at 76,295.36 after hitting an intraday low of 75,807.55. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty declined by 82.25 points, or 0.35 per cent, settling at 23,250.10.

Ajit Mishra, Senior Vice President of Research at Religare Broking Ltd, stated that the Nifty opened lower due to the news of US tariffs but managed to see some recovery, thanks to the strength of select heavyweights, resulting in a relatively range-bound session.

Major losers on the Sensex included Tata Consultancy Services, HCL Technologies, and Infosys. In contrast, PowerGrid, Sun Pharmaceuticals, and UltraTech Cement were among the day's gainers.

BSE small-cap index saw an increase of 0.76 per cent, with 2,809 stocks advancing against 1,175 that declined. Global oil prices saw a sharp fall, with Brent crude falling by 3.68 per cent to USD 72.19 a barrel. *—PTI*

US tariff may hit local steel suppliers, say experts

The US reciprocal tariffs are expected to disrupt global trade flows and affect alternative markets like India, experts said. However, automobiles and auto parts and steel and aluminium articles, already subject to Section 232 tariffs at 25 per cent, announced in March, are not covered in the latest order of tariffs imposed by the Trump administration. Indian Stainless Steel Development Association said the overall volume of stainless steel exports to the US remains modest, limiting the direct impact. *—PTI*

Indian auto part makers in Canada, Mexico not hit

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

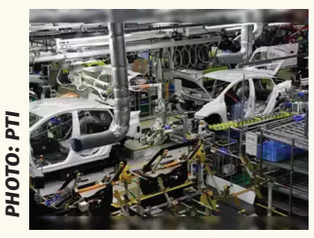


PHOTO: PTI

Indian auto component makers having manufacturing facilities in Canada and Mexico will face no significant impact of US's latest tariff war with the two countries being exempted from additional duties.

Due to the existing order under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act related to fentanyl and migration, the White House confirmed that the new tariffs will not apply to Canada and Mexico.

US-Mexico-Canada Agreement compliant goods from both countries will attract zero duty while non-compliant items will face a 25 per cent tariff.

The 'Liberation Day' tariffs announced on 2 April do not cover autos, auto parts, and steel and aluminum articles already subject to Section 232 tariffs at 25 per cent.

While vehicle tariffs take effect on Thursday at midnight, parts tariff will come into force by 3 May.

India's auto components export to the US stood at USD 6.79 billion in FY24, while it imported 1.4 billion from the US at 15 per cent import duty. *—PTI*

India has edge over China, Vietnam in electronics

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

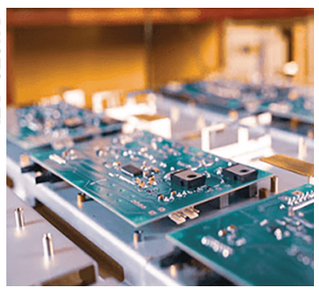


PHOTO: PTI

India's electronics sector is poised to remain competitive despite the newly imposed 27 per cent tariff by the US, according to the India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA). The association suggests that India's position is more favourable compared to rivals such as China, Vietnam, and Indonesia, which face even steeper tariffs—up to 79 per cent for China and 46 per cent for Vietnam.

Pankaj Mohindroo, Chairman of ICEA, emphasised that while initial tariff outcomes are encouraging, the real long-term success for India's electronics trade hinges on finalising a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA). The BTA is seen as crucial for providing stable market access, tariff predictability, and opportunities to scale high-value exports.

ICEA has praised recent negotiations that have positioned India favourably compared to competitors following retaliatory tariff announcements. Mohindroo underscored the importance of leveraging this moment to drive export growth and integrate supply chains, urging focus amid potential retaliatory actions from other economies *—PTI*

TIME FOR ACTION

Textile industry must exploit 'cost advantage' of tariffs

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

PHOTO: PTI

The US retaliatory tariffs will impact the Indian textiles sector in the short-term, however, India still has a relative cost advantage in comparison to other countries, industry experts said on Thursday.

"The 27 per cent tariff on Indian footwear and garment exports to the US is a significant challenge, especially for businesses operating on thin margins. It will impact pricing and demand in the short term," said Apollo Fashion International President Shiraz Askari.

However, stakeholders say that with countries like Bangladesh, Vietnam, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, China, Pakistan, compared to countries like Vietnam and Bangladesh, now face even higher tariffs, India still has a relative cost advantage.

EY India Partner and Retail Tax Leader Paresh Parekh said presently it appears "advantage India" for the Indian textile sector.

The US buys textiles worth over USD 36 billion from India. "This situation poses an opportunity for the Indian textile sector to grab and increase its market share in the US. However, there is a risk as well if there is slowdown in consumption in the US due to higher prices, the overall US market itself may shrink. "The Indian textile sector also hopes to secure further strategic advantage by inclusion of textile in potential "zero for zero" India-USA trade deal if it happens," said Parekh. However, Askari also said the textiles industry should focus on other markets also.

"The focus now should be on improving efficiency, strengthening compliance, and diversifying markets to reduce over-dependence on any one geography. The industry has handled disruptions before, and this is another moment that calls for smart, decisive action." *—PTI*

- The US retaliatory tariffs will impact the Indian textiles sector in the short-term, however, India still has a relative cost advantage in comparison to other countries, industry experts said on Thursday.

Housing.com's parent REA India CEO Dhruv quits

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

Dhruv Agarwala, the Chief Executive Officer of REA India, which operates the real estate platform Housing.com, has announced his resignation to embark on a new entrepreneurial venture.

Agarwala co-founded the proptech firm Elara Technologies in 2011, which later acquired PropTiger, a housing brokerage service in India. In 2017, he took over Housing.com from SoftBank and other investors, steering its growth.

Agarwala said, "It has been a privilege to lead REA India. From founding PropTiger to transforming Housing.com into a leading digital real estate platform, it has been an incredible journey." *—PTI*

4TH DG AT RBI

Former World Bank economist Poonam Gupta is RBI Dy Guv

MUMBAI, 3 APRIL

PHOTO: EACPM.GOV.IN

The government has appointed **Poonam Gupta**, Director General of NCAER, as Deputy Governor of RBI for a period of three years, the central bank said in a statement on Thursday.

The post of the Deputy Governor of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) fell vacant after M D Patra demitted office in January. He was member of the Monetary Policy Committee. With appointment of Gupta, now all four posts of deputy governors have been filled. The first bi-monthly MPC meeting of the current financial year is scheduled for 7-9 April.

Currently, Gupta is the Director General of National Council of Applied Economic Research, India's largest economic policy think tank.

She is also a member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister and Convener of the Advisory Council to the 16th Finance Commission. She joined NCAER in 2021 after working at senior positions for nearly two decades at the IMF and World Bank in Washington DC.

Gupta taught at the Delhi School of Economics, University of Maryland (USA) and as a visiting faculty at ISI, Delhi. She has also been the RBI Chair Professor at NIPFP and a Professor at ICRIER. Gupta holds a Master's degree and PhD in Economics from University of Maryland, USA, and a Master's degree in Economics from Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi.

She won the 1998 EXIM Bank award for her PhD on international economics. She is also a member of Development Advisory Committee of NITI Aayog, and of FICCI's Executive Committee. *—PTI*

Equity market volatility may persist

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

Heightened global uncertainty due to the US sweeping tariffs on India and other countries may cause near-term corrections and market turbulence, but the long-term outlook remains constructive, market experts said on Thursday.

The US has announced 27 percent reciprocal tariffs on India, citing high import duties imposed by New Delhi on American goods. This move aims to reduce the US trade deficit and boost domestic manufacturing.

While this will impact India's exports to the US, experts believe that India is better positioned than its competitors. Notably, foreign portfolio investors turned net buyers in the week ending March 2025 by infusing nearly Rs 28,000 crore, marking the end of a 16-week outflow streak, the longest in 25 years.

However, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined by 378.60 points or 0.49 per cent to 76,238.84 in morning trade. During the session, it depreciated by 809.89 points, or 1.05 per cent, hitting an intraday low of 75,807.55. Similarly, NSE Nifty slipped 80.60 points or 0.35 per cent to 23,251.75.

While export-oriented sectors like electronics, textiles, gems and jewellery, auto parts and processed foods face headwinds, the pharmaceutical sector has been exempted as it supplies over 40 per cent of the US generic drug demand. *—PTI*

8 CRORE TO BENEFIT

In big relief, EPFO simplifies claim process

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

In a move to fast-track claim settlement process for eight crore members, Retirement fund body EPFO on Thursday said applicants seeking withdrawal from provident funds online do not have to upload the image of a cancelled cheque and their bank accounts need not be verified by employers.

At present, members of Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), while applying for withdrawal of funds from PF accounts online, need to upload image of cheque leaf or attested photo copy of the passbook of the bank account seeded with the UAN (Universal Account Number) or PF number. The employers are also required to approve the bank account details of the applicant.

The EPFO has completely dispensed with the requirement of uploading an image of a cheque leaf or attested bank passbook while filing online claims, the labour ministry said in a statement to ensure 'ease of living' for EPF members and 'ease of doing business' for employers. These measures will significantly streamline the process of claim settlement and reduce grievances related to claim rejections, it stated.

These requirements were initially relaxed on a pilot basis for certain KYC-updated members. Since the pilot launch on 28 May, 2024, the move has already benefited 1.7 crore EPF members. Following the successful pilot, EPFO has now extended this relaxation to all members, the ministry said.

The simplified process will also facilitate those who want to change their already seeded bank account by entering their new bank account number along with the IFSC code duly authenticated through Aadhaar-based OTP. *—PTI*

EPFO has dispensed with requirement of uploading an image of a cheque leaf or attested bank passbook while filing online claims ***PHOTO: PTI***

No fee for updation of PPF account nominees

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday said no fee will be charged for the updation or addition of nominees for Public Provident Fund (PPF) accounts as the government has done necessary changes through notification.

It was informed that a fee was being levied by financial institutions for updating ormodifying nominee details in PPF accounts, she posted on X. Necessary changes are made in the Government Savings Promotion General Rules 2018 via Gazette Notification dated 2 April, 2025, to remove any charges on the updation of nominees for PPF accounts, she said.

The gazette notification has done away with the fee of Rs 50 for cancellation or change of nomination for small savings schemes run by the government. "The Banking Amendment Bill 2025, passed recently, allows nomination up to 4 persons for payment of depositors' money, articles kept in safe custody and safety lockers," she said.

Another change relates to redefining of term 'substantial interest' of a person in a bank. The limit is sought to be enhanced to Rs 2 crore from the current Rs 5 lakh, which was fixed almost six decades ago. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Sky is not going anywhere from Mumbai: MCA

MUMBAI, 3 APRIL

The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) on Thursday refuted reports that Suryakumar Yadav was planning a switch to Goa for the upcoming Ranji Trophy season along with some of his teammates, saying that India's T20 skipper was committed to representing the state. Young Mumbai opener Jaiswal has already announced his decision to switch to Goa from Mumbai due to alleged differences with senior players of the Ranji side. Suryakumar had himself rubbished the report on his 'X' handle. *—PTI*

UTT 2025: Five coaches to debut in season 6

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

For the first time in Ultimate Table Tennis' history, teams have been given the freedom to handpick their own coaching staff. Dronacharya Awardee Raman Subramanian, German specialist Chris Pfeiffer, who has coached stars like Sharath Kamal and Manika Batra, veteran trainers Pavel Rehorek and Julien Girard, and former India No. 1 Jubin Kumar are all set to make their Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) debuts in Season 6. Joining them are returning coaches Elena Timina, Parag Agrawal, Subhajit Saha, Soumyadeep Roy, and Sachin Shetty, all eyeing their second UTT title.*—PTI*

World Boxing Cup: Manish, Hitesh, cruise into SFs

NEW DELHI, 3 APRIL

India's Manish Rathore, Hitesh, and Abhinash Jamwal registered commanding victories to storm into the semi-finals of their respective weight categories in the World Boxing Cup Brazil 2025 on Wednesday. In the 65 kg category, Jamwal tamed Germany's Denis Bril with a unanimous decision, while Hitesh defeated Italy's Gabriele Guidi Rontani similarly in the 70kg category. In the 55kg category, Rathore was up against Australia's Paris Olympian Yusuf Chothia and the Indian national champion was up for the challenge. In the semifinals, Rathore will face Nursultan Altynbek of Kazakhstan, Hitesh will take on Makan Traore.*—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Man City star Erling Haaland vows I'll be back

MANCHESTER, 3 APRIL

Holding crutches and wearing a protective boot, Erling Haaland has vowed, "I'll be back." The Manchester City striker is expected to be sidelined for up to seven weeks with an ankle injury sustained Sunday in a 2-1 victory over Bournemouth in the FA Cup quarterfinals.Haaland posted a photo of himself on his social media accounts Wednesday with the Arnold Schwarzenegger-style message. It showed Haaland holding crutches aloft and wearing a protective boot on his left foot. The post included a flexed biceps emoji. The Norway international had scored his 30th goal of the season Sunday before Bournemouth right back Lewis Cook landed awkwardly on Haaland's ankle in a second-half tackle.*—PTI*

Spotlight on Rohit, Pant as MI take on LSG

5-time champions MI have not clicked so far this season

LUCKNOW, 3 APRIL

Two stalwarts of Indian cricket, Rohit Sharma and Rishabh Pant, will be hoping to overcome their lean patch when Mumbai Indians face Lucknow Super Giants in a clash between two struggling teams in the Indian Premier League here on Friday.

Five-time champions Mumbai Indians have not clicked so far this season, with just two points from three games. India captain Rohit's form with the bat has put the MI team management in a tight spot. The same is for LSG skipper Pant, whose extended dry run is not helping matters for the home side. With both teams almost identically placed and each having won a solitary game in three games, the contest could boil down to who exploits the conditions better on the day.

Given that the curators haven't been providing tailor-made pitches to the home sides, something that has caused frustration among the coaches and players in some franchises, the team that gets a head-start with the bat or ball in the power play overs could call the shots.

Rabada returns home from IPL due to personal reasons

South African pace bowler Kagiso Rabada has returned home from the IPL due to personal reasons, his franchise Gujarat Titans, announced on Thursday.

The Titans, though, have not specified the duration of Rabada's absence from the IPL 2025, where he has played two matches. "Kagiso Rabada has returned to South Africa to deal with an important personal matter. *—PTI*

Rohit Sharma and Rishabh Pant PHOTO: PTI

MI VS LSG

HEAD TO HEAD	
PLAYED:	6
LSG Won:	7
MI Won:	5

MI VS LSG Match starts at **7.30 pm IST**

> Pretty embarrassed at dropping Salt, so was determined to score some runs. To help his side to an eight-wicket wins
>
> -Jos Buttler, Gujarat Titans senior batter

> It's my fourth year in IPL, and I feel it has given me a lot of experience. I got exposed to a few difficult conditions
>
> -B Sai Sudharsan, Opener Gujarat Titans

Let's not judge Rohit: Pollard

Mumbai Indians batting coach Kieron Pollard on Thursday played down the chats surrounding Rohit Sharma's lukewarm start to IPL 2025, saying the ace batter should not be judged on the back of a couple of low scores. Former skipper Rohit, who landed MI five IPL titles, has failed to fire so far in this edition of the tournament, making 0, 8 and 13."Rohit has etched his name in history, in record books, in different situations, in different formats of the game. He is a legend of the game. So, let's not judge him on a couple of low scores," said Pollard ahead of MI's match against Lucknow Super Giants here on Friday.Pollard said a big innings from the 37-year-old is just around the corner, and he should not be put under undue pressure. *—PTI*

UNITED NATIONS GAMES

India to take lead in chess and yoga

UNITED NATIONS, 3 APRIL

India is co-organising the second edition of the United Nations Games, taking the lead in chess and yoga at the unique annual tradition at the world body that aims to foster diplomacy and collaboration through the power of sports.

"It was an honour for me to be part of the Opening Ceremony of the Second @UN Games. As a co-organiser, India will take the lead on chess and yoga," India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish said in a post on X Wednesday.

Harish underlined that the UN Games are a celebration of the spirit of unity and international collaboration.

"I look forward to the inclusion of cricket in the next edition of the Games. I wish all participants the best. Team @IndiaUNNewYork, do well," he said, referring to the Permanent Mission of India to the UN.

The United Nations Games 2025 will be held in April–May 2025.

Yoga will be held on April 9 at the Rose Garden, North Lawn in the UN headquarters, while chess will also be held the same day in the North Lawn's Olympic Corner. Prime Minister Narendra Modi led a historic yoga session at the expansive North Lawn on the 9th International Day of Yoga, commemorated on June 21, 2023.

Harish noted that while not everyone may be active sportspersons, most members of the diplomatic community are avid fans, and while people may root for different teams, they are united by sports.

As a cricket fan, like more than a billion Indians, hailing from a cricket-playing nation which is passionate about the sport, Harish said he hopes cricket will also feature in the next UN Games. *—PTI*

A chess prodigy, Gukesh, Inset Parvathaneni Harish PHOTO: PTI

THREE-MONTH BAN

Sinner's former physio blamed for failed dope tests

PARIS, 3 APRIL

World number one Jannik Sinner's former physical trainer, Umberto Ferrara, said on Thursday he was blameless in the case of the three-time Grand Slam champion testing positive twice for a banned substance.

Sinner received a three-month ban, agreed with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in February after "admitting "partial responsibility for team mistakes.

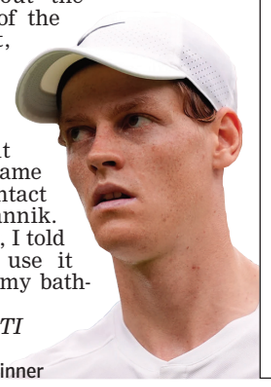
Ferrara, in his first public remarks on the scandal, laid the blame squarely at the door of Sinner's former physiotherapist Giacomo Naldi. Both of them have been laid off by the 23-year-old since the affair came to light.

WADA agreed with Sinner after accepting he was inadvertently contaminated with the banned substance clostebol by Naldi.

Ferrara told Gazzetta dello Sport that he had used the spray himself for years after it was prescribed by a doctor for an illness.

"I was perfectly aware that it was banned, so I always kept it safely stashed away in my wash bag," he said. "I suggested to Naldi to use it for a cut which had not healed and was affecting his work.

"I was clear when I spoke to him about the nature of the product, and it was imperative that it never came into contact with Jannik. In effect, I told him to use it only in my bathroom. *—PTI*



Jannik Sinner

PCB chief Naqvi takes charge as ACC president

DUBAI, 3 APRIL

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday assumed charge as the president of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), succeeding Sri Lanka Cricket supremo Shammi Silva.

The ACC presidency is rotated among the member nations, and it was the turn of Pakistan to take charge. Naqvi will remain president till 2027.

Naqvi's first challenge will be the smooth conduct of the men's Asia Cup, which will be held in T20 format. The tournament is set to be held in September, but the venue is yet to be announced.

"I am deeply honoured to assume the presidency of the Asian Cricket Council," Naqvi was quoted as saying in a media release.

Naqvi promised to work collectively to accelerate the game's growth in the region. *—PTI*

Mohsin Naqvi PHOTO: ASIAN CRICKET COUNCIL/X

Tennis star Coco Gauff starting management firm

NEW YORK, 3 APRIL

Coco Gauff is leaving her longtime agency and launching her management firm so she can "take greater ownership" of her tennis career as she grows "as an athlete, entrepreneur, and changemaker," she wrote on social media Wednesday.

The 2023 U.S. Open singles champion and 2024 French Open doubles champion posted that the new venture will be called Coco Gauff Enterprises.

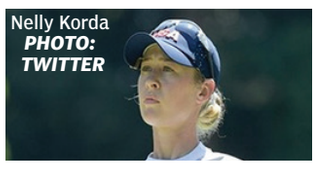
"This is just the beginning of an exciting new era for me, and there is much more to come, which I'll be excited to share in due time," Gauff wrote. *—PTI*

Brittany halves with Korda at T-Mobile Match Play

WASHINGTON, 3 APRIL

Defending champion Nelly Korda became the latest example of anything goes in the T-Mobile Match Play when she settled for a halve Wednesday against Brittany Altomare, No. 828 in the world and still building her game after an 18-month break from having a baby.

Korda was 2 up with four holes to play at Shadow Creek when Altomare won the 15th with a par and the 16th with a birdie. She made a 4-foot bogey putt on the 18th hole to halve the match after Korda was short on her par putt from the fringe. "It's match play, so anything can happen," said Altomare, whose only tournament in 2024 was on the Epson Tour. "To end up in a tie was a win for me. Nelly is a great player." The format has returned to round-robin play among the 16 groups of four players, so Korda still has a path to the knockout stage of the weekend. *—PTI*



Nelly Korda PHOTO: TWITTER

PSG looks to clinch a record 13th French title

PARIS, 3 APRIL

The one-sided Ligue 1 title race could end on Saturday, with Paris Saint-Germain needing only a draw at home against Angers to clinch a record-extending 13th crown.

PSG's massive 21-point lead means it would have to lose the next seven games and Monaco win them all to overtake the Parisians, who are unbeaten in 27 league games.

PSG could finish the league campaign unbeaten, although coach Luis Enrique's side still has to play Nice and has a tricky match away to Strasbourg, with both opponents locked in a tight battle to qualify for next season's Champions League.

This season's Champions League, too, is in Luis Enrique's thoughts.

Good time to rest players?

With a quarterfinal first-leg match against Aston Villa coming up in Paris on Wednesday, PSG can afford to rest several key players against Angers. Coach Alexandre Dujeux's side is 14th and has lost four straight league games without scoring a goal, conceding 11.

However, Enrique is not fond of squad rotation, so he may field close to a full-strength team at Parc des Princes. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X / @PSG

RED BULL SWAP

Verstappen not happy with Yuki Tsunoda

PARIS, 3 APRIL

Max Verstappen confirmed Thursday he was unhappy with Red Bull's ruthless driver swap for the Japanese Grand Prix, saying his endorsement of a social media post criticising the move "speaks for itself". The four-time world champion has a new teammate at Suzuka after Yuki Tsunoda replaced the underperforming Liam Lawson two weeks into the Formula One season. Red Bull have been criticised for not giving Lawson enough time, with former F1 driver Giedo van der Garde saying on social media that the move was "bullying, or a panic move". Verstappen put a "like" on Van der Garde's post and told reporters that it was "not a mistake". "I liked the comment, the text, so I guess it speaks for itself, right?" Verstappen said at the Suzuka Circuit. "Everything has been shared with the team, and how I think about everything.

"Sometimes it's not necessary to always share and say everything in public. I think it's better."

Lawson had been promoted from Red Bull's sister team RB at the end of last season and now returns, with Tsunoda going the other way.

Lawson's two races for Red Bull, in Melbourne and Shanghai, were at tracks on which he had never raced before. "I think for rookies, always at the beginning of the season, you have the calendar nowadays, and F1 is very tough," said Verstappen. *—PTI*

Max Verstappen

Lawson unlikely to move back

Lawson was asked at a media conference Thursday, ahead of Sunday's Japanese GP, if he thought he could get promoted back to the top team. "Yeah, I guess that's part of the conversation," he said. "In a way that's great, but I was already there." His tone suggested another promotion didn't seem likely. And Tsunoda is also under pressure.

Messi and Co stunned by loss to LAFC

DUBAI, 3 APRIL

Los Angeles FC sent Lionel Messi and Inter Miami spinning to their first defeat of the season on Wednesday, scoring an upset 1-0 victory in their CONCACAF Champions Cup quarter-final first-leg clash. A 57th-minute strike from Los Angeles-born El Salvador international Nathan Ordaz handed LAFC a precious advantage heading into next Wednesday's return leg in Florida.

"I think we saw a complete performance," said LAFC coach Steve Cherundolo, whose only complaint was that his team had not managed to win by a more convincing margin.

"If we're honest with ourselves, we need to be a little sharper in front of the goal.

If we get the same types of chances next week in Miami, we need to be a little more ruthless." *—PTI*

Lionel Messi